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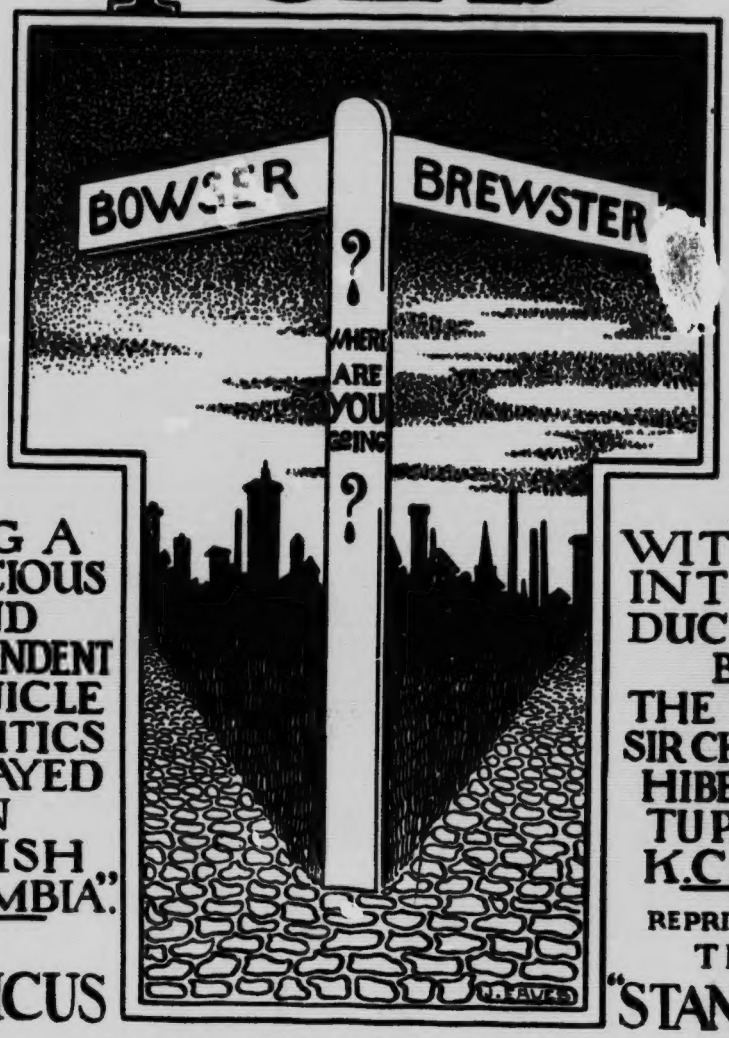
The Turning Point



"BEING A VERACIOUS AND INDEPENDENT CHRONICLE OF POLITICS AS PLAYED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA."

BY

CRITICUS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE HON: SIR CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER K.C.M.G.

REPRINT FROM THE "STANDARD"

VANCOUVER B.C.

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THE TURNING POINT

By

CRITICUS

With an Introduction by

The Hon. Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, K.C.M.G.

Reprinted from
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AUGUST, 1916

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Introduction

IN the Primer of English Literature, Stopford Brooke says:

"Writing is not Literature unless it gives to the reader a pleasure not only from the things said, but from the way in which they are said."

To those who know the past of our political history, and to those who believe in our future development, these articles, I think, must make an irresistible appeal. They are new in our political literature, and as such deserve attention. But they are something more than this. They are fairminded, unprejudiced, and lucid. They paint the canvas of our political life in broad strokes, and yet the details are worked out accurately. They illuminate what is by many considered a somewhat wearisome subject. The writer has the faculty of sweeping aside the wrappings of which our politicians are so fond when they desire to present some new born project to the public. He exposes the body of the legislation to view. He is not afraid of a thing because it is naked. He evidently believes that fine clothes do not make legislation. His analysis of such legislation is ruthless in its logic.

Withal there is a clear running vein of humor all through these articles which lifts them above the usual bitterness of political controversy. The writer laughs at the politicians, laughs at their methods, and the reader will laugh with him. While, for instance, he analyses with biting satire the manner of the building of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, he frankly admits that the blame cannot be placed on the contractors—The Three Musketeers, as he calls them—who are not in business for philanthropic reasons. Whenever his criticism is destructive, he takes good care to show how construction might have been undertaken on the ruins of the legislation he pounds to bits.

But, aside from the facts with which the articles deal, there is at the back of them a straight appeal to the public which shows their real character. The writer has used his pen critically; he wields the sword of satire most effectively. He chastises with a laugh for behind the satire there lurks not only humor but idealism, and the satire impunges the more deeply. He hammers the pettiness of provincial politics mercilessly, but he shows what they might be if only they were conducted in the spirit of "playing cricket." It is this side of the articles I wish particularly to emphasise. We want to "play cricket;" we want to be honest in our convictions, to see clearly between what is "cricket" and what is "kultur." "Cricket" plays a game for the game's sake. It refuses to take a mean advantage of an opponent. It never disputes the umpire's decision, it gives credit for good fielding, batting or bowling to the other side. It uses every ounce of energy and calls to its aid all the skill of which the player may be capable; but it plays fair. "Kultur" is based on the supposition that every game is played to win by fair means or foul. Politics, life, games of all kinds are subject to this acid test. Success justifies everything. The man who cheats at cards is not a cheat if he is not found out. That is the essence of "kultur." "We have done wrong, but must hack our way through," as the German Imperial Chancellor summed it up, in his immortal phrase.

The question we must ask ourselves at this time is whether "kultur" is to prevail in our political life? "Criticus" does not see the necessity and I quite agree with him. I see no reason why we should not insist on politics being played honestly. All through Canada we have seen the fatal connection between politics and patronage. The most glaring illustration is the Manitoba Scandal in respect of the Parliament Buildings. But this is only the apex of the pyramid of patronage. The pyramid itself is built of a thousand little meannesses. There is no need for me to go into details. They are clear to every man who knows anything of political life. The real, fundamental issue between the people of British Columbia and the government of Mr. Bowser, is this question of patronage. I do not know whether the Liberals will take the lesson to heart if they are victorious. But just as surely as the sun sets, so will a Liberal government find itself mired in the same slough which has destroyed the credit and prestige of the present provincial government if it allows patronage to govern its actions. There is a golden opportunity for the blazing of a new trail. I would call the attention of the electorate to the record of the late Sir James Whitney in Ontario. For ten years he was Premier and there was never a whisper against his name. No one ever accused his government of corruption. "Honest enough to be bold, bold enough to be honest" was Sir James' motto.

I am a Conservative and always have been. I do not believe, however, in supporting a government simply because it calls itself conservative, especially when that government is in the hands of a man whose sole conception of politics is "kultur." Mr. Bowser, himself, states that it is necessary to "grease the palm of an Indian" at times. I deny there is any such necessity. For the Premier of a government to excuse bribery on the ground of necessity is exactly the same as for a nation to excuse the violation of Belgium on the ground of necessity. Is the man who makes such an excuse for his actions fit to be the head of a responsible government? The people of British Columbia are asked to adopt the Bowser brand of political honesty. Echoing faintly from a man, a long year ago, but soon to be heeded, are the words of Calhoun in 1843 when he said:

"The very essence of a free government consists in considering offices as public trusts bestowed for the good of the country, and not for the benefit of an individual or a party."

In 1843 Sir Robert Peel wrote:

"All patronage of all descriptions, so far from being of the least advantage personally to a Minister, involves him in nothing but embarrassment."

And in this year, my old colleague, Sir George E. Foster, testifies in the House of Commons, as follows:

"That if there is any laxity in the public virtue of this country today, if there is any canker of public corruption, in 99 cases out of 100 you can trace it to the baneful effect of political party patronage."

There is the canvass made in support of the present administration at Victoria that if defeated, their successors will be just as bad. To this the effective reply is that under our system properly carried out, when a government does wrong it should be dismissed from office. To secure this defeat, I propose to poll my vote for their opponents, but I remain free to oppose the new government whenever it does wrong, even if by so doing the present government should again be restored to power.

CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.

"Tainted at the Fountain Head"

THE Premier of British Columbia, the Honorable Wm. J. Bowser, [illegible] not rely too much on the comforting assur[illegible] of his supporters, that the defeat of his two cabinet ministers in the by-elections in Vancouver and Victoria was so [illegible] due to the desire on the part of the electors to see an opposition in the local legislature. That there is such a desire everyone will admit, but it does not attain the majorities under the weight of which Messrs. Tisdall and Flumerfelt sank from office. The sentiment of the electors has been plain for months; only those who were blinded by the past and their own personal bias could have failed to appreciate it. If Mr. Bowser had been up for election instead of either of his ministers, he would have been defeated by still greater majorities. The plain fact is that the people of British Columbia neither see Mr. Bowser as he sees himself nor do they take him at his own valuation.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Mr. Bowser sees himself as a dominating personality, a virile statesman of transcendant powers, a dictator, an arbiter, whose lightest word is taken seriously, and whose mental powers are so far above those of other politicians in British Columbia that he alone can judge what is or is not good for the people. Like many vain men of small stature, he thinks he resembles Napoleon. Mr. Bowser poses as a man of indomitable strength, a fighter, an incisive and decisive speaker, careless of criticism, self-sufficient, concentrative.

AS OTHERS SEE HIM

To the public he is nothing but a hard-working lawyer who has succeeded through politics in building up a private practice of somewhat large dimensions. Shell him from his surroundings and he remains exactly what he always has been, a commonplace, undistinguished, arrogant, ambitious man, not over scrupulous, and willing to shave his head off if it will give him power and money, both of which are synonymous to him. He is clever, or rather shrewd, but he has no imagination, and no sense of humor. He is calculating and cunning, and has succeeded as a politician but utterly failed as a statesman. His one public virtue is that he means what he says though he very seldom says what he means. This gives him a reputation for directness, fearlessness, and decision, when, truth to tell, it is but the impatience of an autocratic nature with a democratic constitution. His reputation for fearlessness rests entirely on the political foundation of his fortunes. With all the cards in his hands, he struts like a gamecock. With opportunity but no cards, he coos like a sucking dove.

POLITICAL POTIONS

Witness the abnegation of this politically reflected autocrat the week following Mr. Tisdall's defeat. He knees of his fortitude gave way and he grovelled in a manner which disgusted his most ardent supporters. He ordered his non-political minister of finance, much advertised as a pre-eminent business man, to announce a shipbuilding programme of which the only definite feature was the fact that $2,000,000 was to be set aside in order to suckle an infant industry. He positively crawled to the prohibition delegates, ascribing his defeat in Vancouver largely to their machinations. But all in vain. Prohibition was proved to have had nothing whatever to do with the government's defeat in Vancouver, because despite the triumphant depart[illegible] of the delegation from its interview with the premier Mr. Brewster defeated Mr. Flumerfelt even more signally than Mr. Macdonald defeated Mr. Tisdall. But it did prove that the electorate was not to be whipped off the scent by any of the usual political potions with which it used to be regaled by parties desirous of stimulating its latest emotions at the eleventh hour. The real issue between the electorate and Mr. Bowser is not political but personal, and unless the premier and his supporters recognise this, they will go down to defeat at the coming general elections. Both Messrs. Tisdall and Flumerfelt were strong candidates, but their strength lay in their personalities, not in their policies; their weakness, which proves their damnation, lay in their association with Mr. Bowser.

THE FUNDAMENTAL ERROR

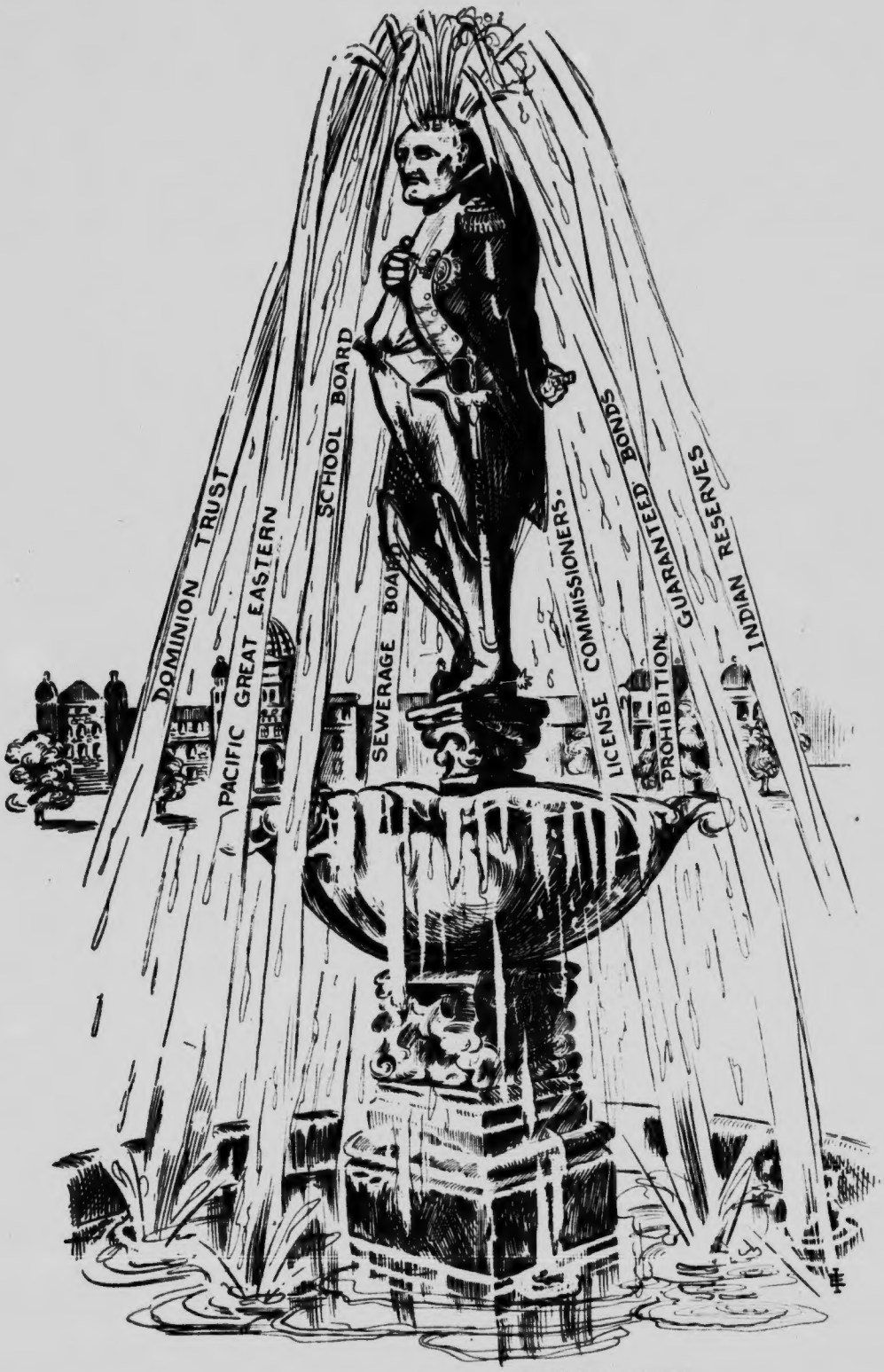
The supporters of Mr. Bowser make this fundamental error. They imagine that times have not changed and that there has been no spiritual awakening of the people. They still pursue the habits of an ostrich and cover their heads in the sand of quibbles. They excuse Mr. Bowser's connection with the firm of Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge on the ground that every attorney-general in Canada when in office keeps his law practice alive. They say that at worst it is human nature to throw business to a firm in which an official supposedly representing the people, is personally financially interested in the fortunes of that firm. They cry with truth that Mr. Bowser is extremely hard working, and has borne the labor of administration in the past. They [illegible] with a good deal of reason why a tried man like Mr. Bowser should be discarded in favor of a novice. They appeal for support on the foundation of the past. They call attention to Mr. Bowser's quickness, his abilities and his alertness.

SERVING TWO MASTERS

But they ignore the fact that a man cannot serve two masters. The cardinal sin of Mr. Bowser in the Dominion Trust disaster is not his connection with the paradoxically illegal legislation by which the managing director, the late Mr. W. K. Arnold, looted the company, but his connection with the firm of Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge, the solicitors for the defunct company. The electorate desire to know without quibbling the exact sum paid by the Dominion Trust Co. to Messrs. Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge for legal advice in the last six years, and what part of that sum was pocketed by Mr. Bowser as a partner in the firm. They do not really care whether Mr. Bowser was hoodwinked by the late Mr. Arnold. What they do care about, however, is the speech made by Mr. Bowser in his own defence the session before last, which raised a new standard of political morality by ignoring the real issues, and dwelling with considerable unctuousness on his great services for the robbed depositors, while he jingled his portion of the fees paid to his firm as representatives of the Dominion Trust Co. in his pockets. Has Mr. Bowser ever attempted to return those fees or at least his portion of them?

THE KITSILANO RESERVE

Mr. Bowser in his speech in Vancouver the Thursday evening before Mr. Tisdall went down to defeat, mentioned the case of the Kitsilano Reserve. He stated that the public was misled by the similarity of the name of Mr. Hamilton Read to that of Mr. Reid, his former partner. The latter, he said, had no connection whatever with the Kitsilano deal. It was consummated by Mr. Hamilton Read, a former clerk in his office, who had severed his connection with the firm before the deal was completed. Now Mr. Bowser knew perfectly well that nobody was misled by this similarity of names. The public wanted to know when the deal was begun, when Mr. Hamilton Read first became cognizant of it, and how many days or hours before it was completed he severed his connection with the firm of Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge. Moreover, it was frankly curious about the division of the so-called commission. The public may be pardoned its curiosity seeing that the Supreme Court of Canada was also curious about it. It knew that Mr. Hamilton Read received $40,000 from Mr. Alexander as a "bonus" out of the $80,000 handed by the government to Mr. Alexander, a government official. It also knew that Chief Cole, the Indian principally responsible for the deal, claimed $20,000 commission from Mr. Read, which he did not receive. But what the public



"TAINTED AT THE FOUNTAIN HEAD"

did not know and what it desired to know, was what became of the $40,000 pocketed by Mr. Bowser's clerk, Hamilton Read, as his share of a deal which apparently was initiated by Mr. Bowser himself. Do the clerks in Mr. Bowser's law office usually receive such splendid honorariums for cases which Mr. Bowser puts their way? If so, what sort of fees do the firm itself receive for such business as the attorney-general of British Columbia is able to recommend to their notice? Mr. Bowser pleads that the investigations into these deals discovered nothing. That is "nothing" according to his standard of political morality.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DILEMMA

The foregoing are two specific cases of how difficult it is to serve two masters. Mr. Bowser may be as honest as he is straightforward, when it suits him. But he cannot escape from what may be called the attorney-general's dilemma, which is to separate his private and public practice. As administrator of the department of justice, Mr. Bowser represents the people, and is paid a salary for so doing. As senior partner in the firm of Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge, he presumably draws a portion of the receipts paid by clients. Do those clients have business with the people of British Columbia whose attorney is Mr. Bowser? In the case of the Dominion Trust, they did. How many contractors, who have business with the people of British Columbia, are represented by Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge? Supposing, for instance, a contract for clearing government land is let to a contractor who draws his money from the government, and that contractor does not pay his workmen but goes into liquidation before the work is completed? What sort of redress have the workmen, who may be foreigners, when they find that the solicitors for the contractor are Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge?

ANOTHER SUPPOSITION

It is admittedly a dilemma. The new Liberal member for Vancouver is Mr. Macdonald, a lawyer, with a practice. Supposing the Liberals victorious at the general election, and Mr. Macdonald, attorney-general. Is he to sever his connection with his firm? As attorney-general he would draw a salary of $6,000 a year. As a private practitioner he might be making considerably more. He may be public spirited, and animated by a desire to achieve distinction in public life. Is he to forego that perfectly legitimate ambition because he makes a larger income at the bar? Is the community to lose the service of an a...? man because he cannot afford to trust to the fickle favors of the electorate? He may find himself in office just long enough to lose his practice. In any case there would be a natural tendency to put such business as he could in the way of his previous partners. He might refuse to allow his firm to practice criminal law, just as it is believed Mr. Bowser's firm refuses criminal cases but the enormous amount of other business available through the office of the attorney-general would amply compensate any firm for the loss of defending or prosecuting a few criminals.

THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION

The only way out of this dilemma is by discussing it in the court of public opinion. Legally there is nothing criminal in taking advantage of the situation thus created. Morally it depends upon the standard of personal honor, always most rigid when concerned with some one else's honor, but most elastic when applied to personal matters. If, however, the legal position is secure, the moral position can be outflanked. At least that is the point of view of so many politicians. There is nothing illegal in getting a reliable business friend to gather options on property surrounding a new site for a public building before announcement of that new site has been made public, and selling those options when the announcement is made, at a very nice profit. There is nothing illegal in appointing at an excellent salary a close relation entirely unfitted by experience or training to a post of considerable technical responsibility and large expenditure of public funds. There is nothing illegal in receiving applications for pre-emptions and holding them back until another reliable friend has had the opportunity of examining the property and pre-empting it for himself. These things are not illegal—they are merely monetary gain. They are playing the game of business with marked cards and with public funds.

THE EXCUSE FOR CHEATING

Moreover, these things are very difficult of proof even before the court of public opinion. It is difficult to obtain evidence as so many people, in a country of lavish public expenditure, rely on some part of that expenditure for their livelihood. In one form or another great pressure can be exercised on any man likely to "squeal." The multiplication of government officials and of government supervision or direct governmental activities in the life of any community multiplies the supporters of government. Under a system of elective government ownership of public utilities or of industries connected with the government, the danger is increased a thousandfold. Any man who is more or less dependent on politics for his livelihood is liable to excuse cheating on the ground that his party must have funds for their political campaigns. Truth to tell, even the public is apt to excuse this form of cheating on the ground that one man is as bad as another and that every politician will take advantage of his position to push his personal interests.

THE AWAKENING OF PUBLIC CONSCIENCE

Now and again, however, there is an awakening of the public conscience and the politician who ignores that awakening is smothered by the accumulated ammunition of his opponents. His personal honesty is assailed on every side and if in addition to the mud uncovered by the falling tide of his political fortunes, his disregard of ordinary courtesies and his greed for personal power provide the attack with a fair field of fire, his defeat is almost a foregone conclusion. This is what has happened to the Honorable William J. Bowser. He believed he was the autocrat of the electorate, forgetting that autocracy demands an aristocracy of intellect. Mere boasting cannot take the place of statesmanship nor the most efficient political organisation the place of leadership. The oil of party patronage may make the machine run smoothly when once it is set going, but it cannot supply the motive power when the personality of leadership is lacking. Mr. Bowser's cup is full of lost opportunities. He showed political ability as long as he was merely managing clerk in the holy order of ward heelers. Directly he assumed full responsibility for the fortunes of his party he proved that to attain the Heaven of his ambitions, he relied on the Gods of the past to whom he had made such lavish sacrifice. But the gods of the past could be placated by choirs singing their praises in unison, while the gods of the future are deaf to laudation. Mere promises of reform sound too much like death bed repentances. Is it any wonder that Chief Justice Hunter should remark that the administration of law in British Columbia is tainted at the Fountain Head?

The Difficulties of a Business Government

THE inevitable outcome of the dilemma of the Attorney-General, caught between the Scylla of public duty and the Charybdis of his private emotions or interests, was illustrated by the manner in which the tide of public opinion set dead against the course pursued by the present Premier and Attorney-General, the Honorable W. J. Bowser. He announced, in donning the mantle which fell from the shoulders of Sir Richard McBride, that he would form a business government and in order to do so appointed Mr. Tisdall as Minister of Public Works, Mr. Flumerfelt as Minister of Finance, and Mr. Lorne Campbell as Minister of Mines. Messrs. Lorne Campbell and Tisdall were the "dummy dolls in Mr. Bowser's store windows." They were discovered among the usual surplus stock carried by all government stores, but brushed up and adorned with fashionable suitings properly labelled, they made an attractive appearance.

Between the two windows, debonair and spruce in his new clothes, Mr. Bowser himself stood beneath the sign, "THIS STORE UNDER ENTIRELY NEW MANAGEMENT." Inside at the cashier's desk, Mr. Flumerfelt was distinctly visible hard at work on the books. Mr. Manson was merged with the shadows in the background as floor walker, while Messrs. Ross and Taylor presided over the counters of Land and Education respectively. The three last were not meant as attractions, they were merely the necessary adjuncts to the business of Mr. Bowser's new government.

PITY THE POOR STOREKEEPER

Most people will admit that there was and is a general demand in British Columbia for a business government. They will also admit, some with a certain reservation, some with humility, some with enthusiasm, that Messrs. Tisdall, Lorne Campbell and Flumerfelt are by no means bad exhibits of British Columbia's business activities. Yet with extraordinary unanimity the electorate of Vancouver and Victoria refused to be attracted by Mr. Bowser's window dressing, with the consequence that Messrs. Tisdall and Flumerfelt were dismissed, and Mr. Bowser, himself, was once more trying to do his best without adequate assistance. The sign, "Under entirely new management" still waggles fitfully in the political breezes over the door of his store, but Mr. Bowser is rushing hither and thither, going over his assets and liabilities, and watching his assistants out of the corner of his eye, wondering by what means he can make his windows sufficiently attractive to have some chance of "carrying on" for another year or two. He deplores the fact that the electorate has apparently no sense of business, though it obviously has a keen sense of humor. He considered the intrusion of Messrs. Brewster and Macdonald an impertinence and he resented their intense curiosity regarding the running of the business, though to do him justice, he has expressed his willingness to give them every facility to examine his books. He glances now and again at the show cards, of which he had been quite proud, "Shipbuilding while you wait;" "Prohibition by Referendum;" "Agriculture on Credit;" "Workmen's Compensation;" "Railways built by Contract," and sundry others, and wonders whether he will be able to obtain the absolutely necessary support for his business of government, if he is to keep his store open after September 14, 1916.

THE ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

"The essential business of government," says the philosophic and prophetic Mr. H. G. Wells, "is to deal between man and man; it is not to manage national affairs in detail but to secure the proper managers, instigators, administrators, generals and so forth, to maintain their efficiency and keep the balance between them."

In any dealings between man and man, there are two aspects to be taken into consideration. The first is legal, the second, sentimental. For the first, a lawyer is essential; for the second, a woman. As there is supposedly no sentiment in business, presumably there is no place for a woman in the business of government. This leads inevitably to the lawyer, whose training is an education in quibbles and precedents. His conception of business is to build up a good case for his client, that means in the business of politics a good case for his party. Therefore there is no place in a business government for a lawyer except as a special pleader of the government's case. He should not be in the cabinet at all. He is simply hired to give legal advice. There should really be two of him and the cabinet should judge between the two. It is admittedly difficult, but if the presumption that business is quite unsentimental is insisted upon, there remains nothing but the lawyer. Perhaps, after all, he is less difficult to deal with than the only alternative, woman, who represents the sentimental aspect of dealings between man and man.

SINNING IN GOOD COMPANY

Under the circumstances, the difficulty of carrying on the essential business of government is plain. Mr. Wells' conception really entails an autocracy such as Mr. Bowser has done his best to establish. He attempted to secure proper managers, instigators, administrators—to wit Messrs. Tisdall, Flumerfelt and Lorne Campbell—and so forth—to wit Messrs. Manson, Taylor and Ross, who would manage provincial affairs in detail, while he himself would undertake the dealing between man and man, otherwise the essential business of government. Mr. Bowser would be the government and if opportunity arose, he might also perform as man and man. It was a great conception and the pity of it is that the people of British Columbia either misunderstood Mr. Bowser, or do not agree with Mr. Wells. At anyrate, if Mr. Bowser has sinned in his conception, he has sinned in the good company of Mr. Wells, and the pleasure of so doing should compensate him for the narrow mindedness of the electorate. For it is better to sin in good company than to be virtuous in dull company. It is a great mistake to imagine that there is really any virtue in going to sleep.

LIVING UP TO A NAME

A "business government" sounds well. It has a modern and materialistic ring which covers a multitude of errors. It might be designated as a new blanket to cover the rags of an old government grown hoary in office and shivering in the draughts of depression. British Columbia undoubtedly wants a "business government," but there are many kinds of business. Can a prime minister who was responsible for the Sewerage Board of Greater Vancouver, for the blind stupidity of the conditions under which "saloons" are run, for the moratorium, for act after act which has had to be amended, for the Dominion Trust legislation—suddenly become a business man? Evidently the electorate does not think so. The business of politics and the business of government are two different things. It is often asked whether it is possible to find anyone better than the present premier to form a business government. It would be better to ask if there is anyone worse? Did not Mr. Bowser himself state that he did not prevent the passage of the Dominion Trust legislation because he was afraid of wrecking his party? Is that business or is it politics? If he is now attempting to live up to the name of business, is it not a case of the gentleman who was sick desiring to be a saint?

SUPPOSING——

On the other hand, supposing the premier to be a very much maligned man who is in the unfortunate position of having to bear the sins of others upon his shoulders. Supposing he is really fired with a desire to lead the people of the province into the business land which is to flow with the milk of commerce and the honey of sweet content. It is easy enough to criticise but not so easy to govern under the party system. Supposing Mr. Bowser is not the political "boss" of his party, but the victim of

a system which is the curse of democracy. Pure mischance has placed him where he is and he longs for the quiet of privacy but believes he has a great public duty to perform. Under the circumstances, it must be an unpleasant duty not only because the province is passing through a period of depression, which has hardly anything to do with the war, despite eloquent orations to the contrary, but because some of the premier's late colleagues may have allowed their enthusiasm for business to outrun their discretion. Supposing all these things—and it is pleasant to be fanciful at times—if a real business government were to be established, would not the first step be to call a round table conference of men who have no connection with politics? Would it not be advisable to ask the bank managers, the lumbermen, the shippers, the merchants, the insurance agents, the mine operators, the Trades and Labor councils, the farmers, each to appoint a representative to meet together and frankly discuss with the government the best policy to be followed in order to meet the general demand for a business government. But to form that government and straightway proceed to try and borrow money for this or that pupose when admittedly money is difficult to borrow, savors of adding to liabilities and pretending they are assets. It may not be popular to economize, but being popular is not necessarily being business-like.

THE OPPOSITION AND BUSINESS

Let not the Liberals jump to wrong conclusions regarding the present temper of the electorate. The truth is all politicians are suspect and all parties mistrusted. The Liberals need not imagine they are placed in a different category to the Conservatives. The general sentiment is to give them a chance to show what they can do under present circumstances. The general idea is that they may prove a nice new broom for a year, but that if they get control they will dissipate their heritage in a veritable debauch of patronage. In British Columbia there is an exceedingly large independent vote which may be termed sentimentally Conservative. It was this vote which overwhelmed Messrs. Tisdall and Flumerfelt. The mistake usually made by the politicians is to ignore the independent vote because it is not organized, never attends a ward meeting, never discusses local politics in public, but goes about its own business until such time as it chooses to make its power felt. Because it is silent the politicians seem to think it does not exist. Yet the Liberals should have learnt their lesson in the past few years. They were swept out of existence as far as representation in the Provincial and Federal house was concerned almost entirely on account of patronage. It is no use being blind to this silent power. It is very real and if it is any information to Mr. Bowser, it intensely resents being treated as if it were composed of a lot of children. The very fact that it does not squall should warn the politicians. It is this silent vote which controls the fate of both parties. It is this silent vote which ardently desires a business government, simply because it is composed very largely of the real business activities of the province.

THE REAL NEED

There is no need to analyse the Workmen's Compensation Act, the conditions under which the construction of certain railways may be completed, the problems of shipbuilding, mining, liquor or finance, in order to discover whether a government intends to be a business government or merely a political party. One of the essential conditions which the politicians have to face is that the electorate is very tired of politics. It wants business. It desires to build a new prosperity on the very real and very rich resources of the province. Undoubtedly each element which goes to make up the whole community is anxious to benefit itself under the auspices of business. Yet these various elements could co-operate if their common sense business instincts were appealed to in a business-like manner. What is good for one will probably benefit all. Truth to tell it needs courage and statesmanship, not politics, to establish a real business government. Above all, it needs a frank and real independence of past methods. The real need is to carefully inquire into the working of each department under its permanent officials. The permanent officials should be the backbone of a business government and each department should be subject to their needs and not the political necessities of whichever party happens to be in power.

The Curse of Patronage

SIR GEORGE E. FOSTER, Dominion Minister of Trade and Commerce, in a recent speech, declared that patronage was the curse of politics in Canada. He might have added it was the purse of politics, or rather of political parties, for parties consider the purses of their patrons far more than the curses of their opponents. The government knows the opposition will avail itself of every opportunity to attack the inevitable outcome of the patronage system, but will never attack the system itself, lest at any time the turn of fortune's wheel places it in the position of dispenser of the loaves and fishes on the political table. The honest politician—and he is not such a rare bird as the politicologists aver—almost inevitably becomes entangled in the net of patronage and is captured by the dispenser of government favors. As a young and ambitious man he may enter the political arena determined to live on his salary and make his way purely by forensic or other abilities and turn his back from all subsidiary interests. But his constituent [illegible] patronage or expenditure and judge him by the cash result of his activities. The public works department of government is the dispensary to which he must apply for those medicines which are popularly supposed to cure his constituents of their inalienable right to grumble. The more perilous his seat the more soothing medicine required. So he becomes a constant suppliant for docks, warehouses, elevators, post offices, public buildings, and all those things which bespeak progress and prosperity even if their real value to the taxpayer is somewhat problematical.

WHAT IS PATRONAGE?

In the days of ancient Rome the master who had freed his slave but still retained some paternal rights over him was known as a patron. This gave rise to what is known as patronage and which today when applied to the body politic means the right of nomination to political office and also the offices, contracts, honors and so forth which a public officer may bestow by favor. It will be noted that it is distinctly a matter of favor, not a matter of fitness. It has nothing whatever to do with appointments which are given to men whose abilities qualify them for positions. In the public service of Canada today there are hundreds of men totally unfitted by experience or training for the positions which they hold in the public service. They consist to some extent of politicians who have succeeded in becoming members of the Dominion or Provincial legislatures, and on retiring have been presented with a postmastership, a customs billet, or some other post which pensions them at the expense of the public.

PITY THE POOR MEMBER

It is natural, therefore, that during the life of any one party the members of that party are liable to look around for some sinecure into which they may step when they feel it is time for them to resign. The salaries paid our legislators are not such as to attract any business or professional man if he has to devote his entire time to politics, which largely consist in obtaining favors for his constituency. His expenses are heavy, as he is expected to

AN IDEAL WORTH FIGHTING FOR

British Columbia expects every citizen to come to her aid between now and September 14, in the fight to kill the blind monster of political patronage, in whose slime is developed graft, bribery, theft and fraud.

be a liberal contributor to all public activities. If he cannot address an association for the promotion of the public welfare he can at least send a cheque, which is received more gratefully than the address. Popularity is chiefly a matter of the satisfactory digestion by his constituents of the loaves and fishes he can secure from the dispensary. To be successful the member must be backed either by those who desire something in return for their support or by an awakened public opinion which, as a rule, takes no interest in politics until its local interests are at stake.

THE PATRONAGE COMMITTEE

The result is that politicians who are honest are not believed to be honest. They are all tarred with the same brush. Their nest is popularly supposed to be lined with the same feathers. If a perfectly honest politician, who cannot afford to depend entirely on politics for his livelihood, is engaged in any other form of business, any increase in the growth of that business is attributed to government patronage. If he is not engaged in any other business it is considered an absolute certainty that he is making money out of politics. As member for his constituency he is supposed to have the patronage of that constituency. He may at election time inform his audiences that patronage will be left in the hands of a committee, but the committee is merely a convenience which adds to the number of channels through which governmental favors flow. In Vancouver today it is believed Dominion patronage is exercised by the member acting through a committee which is composed of certain men whose knowledge of politics may be profound but whose knowledge of policies is bliss. 'Tis folly to be wise when ignorance is no barrier to preferment. All work to be done which comes under the aegis of the Dominion Government or Provincial Government, must be examined by the patronage committee and its recommendations are final. Naturally it would not give work to a rival who might vote against itself. Thus the committee serves the country and itself, no doubt to its own perfect satisfaction and with due regard for the efficiency of the public service. It is the same with both parties. It is not considered extraordinary—it is normal and legitimate politics.

THE HARBOR BOARD

An excellent illustration of patronage is the Vancouver Board of Harbor Commissioners. This is appointed by the Dominion Government and the members thereof are salaried. No one knows what they get; the sum for some reason or other is not published. A veteran business man and Conservative member of the provincial legislature is chairman. Probably few men would make better chairmen. In due course he will retire, possibly when the member for Vancouver gets beaten or retires from Dominion politics. The member may then be appointed to the Board as chairman. Knowledge of the business is not necessary. One member of the board is a most respected marble mason, whose exceptional gifts as a designer of tombstones no doubt fully qualify him as an assessor of shipping dues. The member for the constituency recommends certain people for such appointments to headquarters in Ottawa. Naturally he recommends men who have done him a good turn, been active workers for the party which he represents, or are members of one or other of the societies to which he belongs.

A POSITION OF HONOR

There is no reason whatever why the harbor board should not be administered by a secretary, engaged because of his experience with that class of work and supervised by a board chosen from among business men interested in the development of the harbor, who belong to the various transportation, shipping, dock and other interests. To belong to such a board is an honor and no doubt there are several business men who would consider it an honor and not ask for payment. The powers of the board can be regulated by legislation and all their meetings should be public. But this most simple method, which is common to all other countries, is abandoned so as to allow for the full play of politics and provide jobs for certain people who are politicians, not business men. A member who has given up his business and gone in for politics must look out for a soft billet in case he is forced into oblivion at any election. If his party loses the election then all these appointments are liable to be revised by the party coming into power. Consequently there is no devotion to duty, merely a devotion to party.

A PERMANENT CIVIL SERVICE

The post office is another excellent example of a similar state of affairs. The permanent staff may be filled with capable men with expert knowledge of administration. The heads are usually "dead" politicians. Consequently there is no reason for men working hard and doing their best. They can only reach assistant jobs even if they can reach those. The Sewerage Board in Vancouver, a creation of the Provincial Legislature, is another example of patronage. It expends large sums of money, and any department which spends money is a legitimate oiler of the political wheels. All such bodies should really come under the head of a permanent civil service. There should not be any question of party politics; there is no reason why there should be. The civil service of the country should be considered a regular profession for which men are trained just as they are in Great Britain. Special experts such as engineers can be obtained by selection, but the selection should be made by the permanent civil service staff just as the directors of any company select experts to advise them on special matters. The present system is not only archaic and wasteful, but it is stupid. It is specially designed to get the minimum of result with the maximum of graft.

NO ESCAPE FROM GRAFT

Under the present system is is only natural that every kind of government business is constantly looked on with extreme suspicion. The most honorable man with all the determination in the world to do his level best for his country cannot escape from the miasma which surrounds all public offices. It is a poisonous and most insiduous gas which permeates all public undertakings. The opposition can always find fault with some appointment, can always find some person more or less personally interested in government jobs. In a country like Canada where the government undertakes so many activities, every one of those activities sooner or later comes under suspicion. A man may make a fine record for himself in his private business and then when the government offers him an important post regardless of what his politics may be, he is at once singled out for all kinds of abuse. There is not a man in Canada today who would accuse either Sir Wilfrid Laurier or Sir Robert Borden of making money out of politics. Both are men of the highest personal honor, yet both are victims of a system which has put Canada on a level with the United States as the worst country in the world for political corruption.

THE PANAMA CANAL

Both countries must spend enormous sums of money through their public works departments. The Panama Canal is an excellent example of work done for the country by men whose sole purpose was to complete a job which would redound to the honor of their country. But in order to do so the work had to be taken out of politics and made a separate business. And it is most interesting to note that it was handled on the military system under military officers and engineers. All Congress did was to vote the money. It had nothing whatever to do with appointments. These were made entirely by Colonels Goethals and Gorgas who were in charge of the work, the one as engineer-in-chief, the other as medical supervisor. The result of that work and the excellent example it gave of public work untainted by political influence has been of untold benefit to the United States.

THE FIELD OF FIRE

In Canada the lesson has not been learnt. The Public Works Department is nothing but a political dispenser of loaves and fishes. It does not matter in the least which party is in power, the minister at the head of the public works department is invariably the target for criticism, with "graft," in other words, sheer dishonesty, stealing, embezzling public funds, or whatever you like to call it, as the field of fire. Does the Dominion Government construct a wharf, then the question of tenders, the names of the contractors, their relations with this or that member, come in for careful scrutiny. If a pile falls out of a wharf and

kills someone, or an accident takes place, the government is accused of "graft." But it is the government's own fault. Why on earth no premier has had sufficient strength to alter the system and earn for himself undying fame, the mere man on the street cannot tell. Presumably he also is a helpless victim of the system which saps the strength of every government and invariably is the chief cause of its defeat in the long run.

THE SINEWS OF WAR

A political party must have funds, and these funds are supplied from various sources. Apparently the chief source is the government contractor or public works department. The contractor wants a job from the government. He may get that job on tender but there are invariably extras. The case of the Kelly firm and the late Manitoba government is in point. It is supposed that the money stolen from the people went not to any one politician but to the party funds, not only the provincial party funds but those of the Dominion party as well. Locally, in the recent inquiry into the commission of $75,000 given to Mr. J. S. Matson, proprietor of the "Colonist" and "News-Advertiser," Mr. Matson confessed that he paid the "News-Advertiser" $30,000, saying that he owed it that sum. Mr. Matson may really have borrowed that sum from the "News-Advertiser," but the public does not credit it because it knows Mr. Matson has a great deal of government printing, in other words, is a government contractor, and as such probably contributes largely to the party funds. But the public jumps to the conclusion that $30,000 went back to the party funds, in other words, that the Conservative party took $30,000 of public money for their own political purposes. It will be admitted that it is very hard on the Conservative party and very hard on Mr. Matson that such thoughts should spring into men's minds. But that is the result of patronage and proves the evil it does. The most perfectly innocent transaction does not escape similar opprobrium.

BOTH PARTIES TARRED

The Liberals cannot complain of the Conservatives. Their record in past years when their patronage was in the hands of one of the shrewdest and hardest working business men in Vancouver, was appalling. It is simply stupid to blame anyone who finds he can reap much advantage from a political system which practically provides him with a special license in all his business undertakings, for making money out of politics. He is in business not politics. His intimate acquaintance with political parasites who cling like limpets to his office door, renders him extremely sceptical of any man's honesty. He perceives men of far better education than himself flattering him and doing many things to obtain his favor, which he himself would despise himself for doing. He likes the feel of power, to order this man here or that man there. He is perfectly indifferent to the politics of the day. All he desires is to exercise the political patronage and if it costs him a large sum in cold cash he regards that sum purely as a business investment. He will very likely be found subscribing to both parties, from two different sources. He would never think of allowing any clerk in his office to take advantage of a customer; to get the better of a rival in business is another matter altogether. He will give the best service possible and sell the best goods because it is good business. If the people of the country in which he carries on his business are fools enough to lend themselves to an archaic political system which he can turn to his financial advantage, why should he be blamed? He is there to do business, not teach people common sense.

COMMON SENSE

The want of common sense, of the most ordinary business capacity, in the administration of our various governments, is caused solely by this system of patronage which chains the most energetic, honest and able men to the gangs of politicians who exist on the crumbs which fall from the contractors and "bosses" tables. The crass stupidity of imagining in these days that the community can be bribed by giving its representative some public office, through which his constituency will receive the full benefit of patronage, is obvious. Yet cabinets are usually chosen by districts. There may be two members from Vancouver in the local legislature who are pre-eminently fitted to hold ministerial rank, but only one of them will be appointed lest the constituency of Kamloops deem itself slighted. That sort of thing was all very well ten years ago but British Columbia has not remained in baby clothes. No one really cares today whether a cabinet minister sits for Vancouver or Timbuctoo. What the people care about is an honest and efficient administration. The cure lies in the hands of the people. They should demand of every candidate his definite adherence to a resolution which he will pledge himself to bring forward in the house if he is elected. This resolution should provide that all public work should be undertaken only through the public works department, which should be a permanent department of the civil service.

GOOD INTENTIONS

This is, of course, the excellent intention which paves the road to the hell of corruption. But the intention is marred by the political necessities of parties. The minister of public works is the exploiter of his department instead of its mouthpiece. His only duty should be to acquaint himself with the practical necessities of his department and lay his conclusions before the permanent officials. Upon the officials should fall the responsibility for all contracts and all work undertaken. They can estimate from year to year the requirements of the country and can draw up what they consider to be the necessary programme. They would have to work within the limitations of the regular budget and the money provided for the department. The minister should have no say whatever in the assignments of contracts, in tenders, in actual work. All employees and contractors should be responsible solely to the permanent officials. It is scandalous and preposterous that some petty political chairman of a ward should be allowed to initial applications for work on government jobs. The department should work regardless of political changes. The permanent head of the department would occupy the same sort of position as is occupied by the chairman of the railway board. It would save Canada an immense sum of money every year if this were done. The minister of the department can advise and consult but he should not be allowed to interfere with the working of the department.

THE BASIS OF GOVERNMENT

Essentially the idea on which our form of government is based is that the government of the country is a business of which the people are the shareholders and the ministers the directors elected by those shareholders. The directors are appointed by the premier, who is really the chairman, to various departments as supervisors and advisors. They should be merely the links which bind the whole business together. Each department should have a general manager and the general managers should really form a secondary cabinet which could at all times advise the directors and if the directors refused to carry out their advice could resign en masse and refuse to be responsible for the carrying out of such wishes of the directors as they considered inimical to the best interests of the country. These general managers should be paid at least $25,000 a year each and their posts should be permanent. When they resign after a certain number of years service there should be a suitable pension attached. By this means the best men would be attracted to the civil service. Moreover, a permanent body of such officials behind the merely political body would be of untold benefit to the whole country. If the country demanded a certain policy and returned a party to power pledged to carry out that policy, it would probably be modified in accordance with the business necessities of the situation. Behind the heat and sentiments of party politics would stand a permanent body of sane men ready to advise and construct.

DEMOCRATIC AUTOCRACY

It might be said that the creation of such an inner cabinet would be the basis of an autocracy and that the people would not be able to rule themselves because of this permanent official body which was not subject to the whims and fancies of the electorate. But it is plain that parliament and the ministers would really control policies. The permanent officials could only advise or amend, such amendments being submitted to parliament and debated. This

is merely the roughest outline of the sort of method which would be able to establish efficient control of all our public services without interfering with democratic government

PAYING THE PRICE OF PATRONAGE

Patronage with its evil trail lays a heavy toll on the life of Canada. It throttles all finer aspirations, makes politics a morass which destroys those who would tread its paths, besmirches the reputation of the most honest of men, allows personal interest to batten like a cancer on the whole body of political life. Once eliminate patronage from politics and those who desire to serve the country honorably and honestly can do so without fear. But under present conditions, to serve the country means to lose every shred of personal reputation. The public service becomes the refuge of self-seekers, the permanent home of intrigue and dishonesty. The chairmanship of some ward association is more important than the head of a government department. There is no more narrow-minded and ignorant autocracy than the autocracy created by special privilege. Patronage is the mother of privilege, and politics the husband of patronage. Their spawn is spread like a mire over the whole of Canada. Out of it springs corruption. Every single instance of political corruption in Canada can be traced back to patronage. It is no use blaming individuals or parties. Patronage is the natural outcome of democracy sacrificing its principles on the altars of Mammon. If democracy is to survive it must be honest

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The Old Time Gambler Turned into the Popular Politician

THE historian of the future studying the trend of events in the Northern Pacific Coast states of the American continent during the days of the great war, will be struck with the legislative intoxication of the inhabitants of those states. It would seem that the earlier history of the white people of the coast rotated mainly in dance halls and saloons, alternated years of arduous toil with months of glittering fortune, professed the ethics of gambling and the expert handling of hardware known as shooting irons. Gradually as so-called civilization spread, life became less violent and more sanitary. It settled into more or less regular channels, and while it lost [illegible] of its spaciousness and, consequently, of its picturesqueness, it found a certain sobriety of demeanor necessary to the con[illegible]t of business and the consequent investment of capit[illegible] The law rendered the tenure of proper[illegible] more or [illegible] [illegible]ure. Gentlemen of the road be-ca[illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] the practice of law succeeded [illegible] [illegible]ck [illegible]w; from the dance hall evolved th[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]hen the church; the gambler turned into th[illegible] [illegible]ar politician. It was a regular evolution, natural to [illegible]-agricultural communities. Agriculture is not an [illegible]citing pastime. There is not much stimulation in a cabbage e[illegible]pt to an irrepressible artistic tempera[illegible]ent. The evolution of an agricultural community is quite different. It is more solid. It does not flow in channels - it grows in spots. It is the blood and bone behind the brilliant, if somewhat freckled, complexion of the earth.

LEGALITY IS SALVATION

The natural tendency of any individual or community is towards expression. Beauty is the surface expression of volatility. It is the radiant bubble of the artistic temperament. Seriousness is the surface expression of the extreme utilitarian. Nothing is good unless it is useful. To adorn a church is to detract from the seriousness of religion. Nothing is right unless it conforms to the law. Legality is the bedrock of salvation. To the extreme utilitarian the frame is more important than the picture. Under such circumstances it is hardly surprising that there arose a sentiment which regarded the letter of the law infinitely superior to the spirit. There is nothing volatile about a letter. It is necessary to the formation of a word and the understanding of a sentence. It impresses itself on the mind as something substantial. It is not subject to changes of temperature or temperament. There it stands impressive, charged with usefulness, the negation of chaos. But the spirit is the very antithesis of the letter. It is subject to all kinds of expression, to variations of temperament and temperature, it is volatile, difficult to grasp. The sentiment which formerly expressed itself in romance and adventure gave place to the sentiment which found expression in brick and stone, in strict utilitarianism. The plug hat and black frock coat of the gambler became the hall mark of respectability. The gambler hid behind the demeanor of the undertaker. He dealt in real estate instead of in cards. He gave up smoking and drinking to become a trust company.

THE LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE

Followed in detail it is a curious transformation. It took place slowly and without any violent dislocation of society. The various shocks of the change were absorbed by the cotton wool of legislation. It was found possible to legislate a gambling house into a trust company, and the shroud of respectability settled upon everything. Every passing sentiment left its impress on the law. Politicians were quick to seize on any sentiment which sought to express itself. Instead of expanding naturally, it was obliged to expand within the confines of legislative enactments. Everybody came to look upon the government with its legislative powers as a kind of wet nurse to every form of activity or morality. Being representative of the people it was supposed to express their sentiments. In reality it expressed the sentiments of the few. The many were far too much absorbed in their own immediate interests. When those interests might be encouraged or discouraged by legislation the particular section of the community affected would send a deputation to interview the government. The government would naturally follow the line of least resistance, which was always plainly indicated by the number of votes likely to be for or against the legislation asked for

CHARACTER KILLED BY LAW

What else could be expected? Governments are composed of human beings with an instinct for self-preservation. If the leaders of the government proposed legislation which from the strictly business point of view might be criticized as somewhat futile, they could easily persuade their followers that it was at least useful from the political standpoint which meant the number of votes it might be expected to draw. Votes, after all, mean power, and consequently, its ability to gratify its friends. Thus political conditions affected every line of activity, and naturally evolved an orgy of legislation. That which was good could be made better, that which was evil could be eradicated by the act of the legislature. Instead of depending on character, people relied on the artificial restrictions imposed by law. There is really nothing very strange in this. The tendency is not confined only to the Pacific Coast states, but is world-wide. It is the natural bent of socialism to rely on the state. The German bureaucrats were quick enough to note the trend of socialism and its natural result. The more socialistic the sentiment, the more power could be centred in the state.

REFLECTING THE GOVERNMENT

It is not only the bureaucratic form of government which will be broken by the war, but socialism as practised and preached in the past, will probably give way to co-operation, which is a totally different thing. The world has noted how Germany moulded socialism into the bureaucracy, how paternalism entered into every form of economic and social activity. The government controlled the country through every channel of its life. Thus it moulded the people and they became representative of the government. They became stamped with its characteristics and

lost their own power of expression. They adopted the morals and religion of the bureaucratic government which clung to power through the complete control it exercised over the army. What is known as socialism in Germany is a totally different thing to socialism in a democratic country. Socialism in Germany was merely the expression of liberalism, the desire to be free, to express itself rather than reflect the government. If the people of Germany had been able to control their government the war might not have occurred, simply because the people would never have been educated in the gospel of militarism. The control exercised by the government was based entirely on the army. The army was the expression of the government and became the expression of the German people through a long period of education directed towards the one end.

THE OLD TIME GAME

The question arises whether the people of British Columbia find expression in the government or whether they reflect the government? At the present time there can be but one answer to that question. The government does not represent the spirit of the people. It represents the past. It has not changed, but the people have changed. That is the point of which so many of the old-time politicians lose sight. They cannot conceive that the same methods which served them so well for so long will serve no longer. Their only idea is to be able to stand on a platform and extol the greatness of the country and the wonderful progress it has made. They resent any criticism of this method because it has served them so well in the past. They are really just as incongruous today as the old-time professional gambler in his plug hat and frock coat would be if he appeared in the lobby of the Vancouver hotel. They ignore the obvious and become entangled in the net of insincerity. They do not understand the psychology of the people in the very least. They have no conception of the change in sentiment and believe that all they have to do is to "put it over" their opponents. It is an old and very stale game which is being played all the time by men who are so shortsighted that they invariably quibble when frankness would be far more profitable.

THE PREMIER'S LITTLE WAY

As an example of this method, Premier Bowser's letter to the North Vancouver City Council regarding construction on the Pacific Great Eastern Railway from North Vancouver to Squamish is excellent. The council had written asking if any part of the money to be lent to the Pacific Great Eastern was to be spent on completing construction of this particular portion of the line. The letter called attention to the agreement between the government and the railway company, which distinctly stated that this portion of the lines should be built. It is a well-known fact that probably this is the most expensive portion, as the Howe Sound section must run along the rocky sides of mountains which plunge almost sheer down to tide water. Instead of mentioning this and asking the council to have patience or make suggestions as to the best method of carrying out the original agreement now that the conditions have changed, Premier Bowser the Tactful, dictates the following delightful and most grammatical epistle:

> "In this connection I beg to state that I am not in a position to answer questions in this regard at present, until we first borrow the money necessary to carry on the work upon the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. I may further say that I do not appreciate the tone of the resolution moved by Mayor Hanes, the Liberal candidate in the North Vancouver riding, in which he asks me in a dictatorial manner to reply to these questions. I may further state that I have never held that I was responsible to any city council for my administration of the government, but to the people at large."

FLAPPING HIS WINGS

Hoity toity. Our little fighting cock flaps his wings and struts his best. He does not appreciate the tone of this or that resolution, he does not like the dictatorial manner adopted by the Liberal candidate in the North Vancouver riding. Was there ever so foolish, so utterly absurd an answer to a business question? Whatever the tone of the resolution, surely the premier of British Columbia has sufficient dignity to ignore the tone and treat the discourtesy of the Liberal candidate as it deserves—if there was discourtesy in the resolution. To launch forth in a political tirade of this sort proves his vanity and his arrogance. It shows him utterly lacking in common sense. Here are the people of North Vancouver who have looked forward to the completion of the railway and who have to pay taxes and supply part of the interest on the money borrowed for the purpose of building this railway, told plainly to mind their own business, by the same man who only three years ago solemnly pledged that the railway would be built according to agreement. He has lied once and can plead extenuating circumstances. But he cannot lie twice—as he does when he says he is not in a position to answer questions until the money is borrowed. If that is the truth, then he has lied to the whole people of British Columbia, for he distinctly stated that the money would be applied to the completion of the line from Clinton to Fort George, and he actually enumerated some of the so-called securities given by the Pacific Great Eastern Development Co.—for which subsidiary of Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart it is believed Mr. Bowser's firm was the legal representative in their acquirement of townsites and other real estate from the government of British Columbia, of which Mr. Bowser was attorney-general.

POLITICAL LMORALITY

But while this does illustrate the past, does it illustrate the spirit of the people today? Premier Bowser has no more conception of what government means than he has of what political morality means. His sole idea of government is personal power, to dictate to the people of British Columbia what they shall or shall not do. His sole idea of political morality is to profit by his connection with his law firm and to exercise political patronage to the fullest extent, so as to attach to himself the votes of the people. He is completely obsessed with that idea. He believes all the people are fools all the time and that he has only to make statements and they will be believed. But the people have changed. They do not believe in this sort of thing. They desire above all things political honesty, and they are determined to obtain it. They will refuse to perpetuate the relations between their legal representative and the contractors and others who have business with their government. Mr. Bowser and his methods are the basis on which the present government of British Columbia rests. It does not rest on Messrs. Lorne Campbell or Manson or Ross. With the exception of Mr. Lorne Campbell, the rest of the government is not even a pale reflection of an executive. They are mere dummies occupying the show window—and, truth to tell, they are a very poor lot of dummies. Behold Dr. McGuire, for instance, a former dentist, who originally retired from the field of provincial politics in order, it is said, to become a senator. Then prohibition seemed more profitable than dentistry, and through his work for that organization he becomes a member of the "Business Government."

COMMON SENSE versus POLITICAL SENSE

But it is absurd to criticize dummies. They are clinging to the skirts of Mr. Bowser, soiled as they may be, in the hope that he may yet win his way to victory at the next elections. The electorate admires a man who has the courage of his convictions and refuses to bow his knee continually to the strutting little premier. It is thus difficult to avoid the conclusion that the people of British Columbia need not worry so much about Liberals or Conservatives as about those who are pledged to follow Mr. Bowser or who will oppose him. It is probably true to say that the next election is purely one of personality. The whole weight of public opinion, the whole weight of decent, straight forward business, should be against Mr. Bowser, not as leader of the Conservative government, but as premier, attorney general and partner in the firm of Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge. It is time that the people gave their opinion on this matter and gave it without quibbling. Is the attorney general of British Columbia to use his position to make a personal profit out of his law firm? If Mr. Macdonald is slated for attorney-general under a Liberal regime—if the Liberals won the election—is he going to unequivocally cut himself loose from his present

law associates? If he does not, then he should not be elected.

DEALING THE CARDS

Lawyers in politics are unfortunately guided almost entirely by their legal training. But they can be honest and Mr. Bowser is not honest. He does not pick pockets or swindle or do things which bring him within the pale of the law—but he does take a salary from the people of British Columbia to represent them as attorney-general, and he takes fees as a lawyer from those who have business with the people of British Columbia. The thing is so dishonest that it is amazing he can have the impudence to defend it. He pleads that every attorney-general in Canada does the same thing, but it is doubtful if any of them practice their business in the fashion of Mr. Bowser. It is this standard of political immorality which Mr. Bowser represents and upholds. It is the cancer at the root of local politics. It is the disease which proved the death of the Dominion Trust Co. and it is the plague spot in the construction of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co. An honest man would act quite differently to the manner in which Mr. Bowser defends this outrageous conduct. If legislation came before the government and concerned some client of Messrs. Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge, Mr. Bowser, as premier and attorney-general, should refuse to take part in the debate, or have anything whatever to do with such legislation, or he, at least, should publicly announce that his firm is acting in the matter. But he cannot rise above the level of the political customs of the past. His whole attitude proves that he is merely the gambler turned politician because he finds it easier and more profitable to deal the cards of legislation than to earn an honest living as a lawyer.

CRUCIAL TIMES AHEAD

That is one of the main reasons why we have such an orgy of legislation. The whole idea of the premier is centred on the law. He cannot conceive how any business can be encouraged or helped except by act of parliament. His intelligence does not rise above guaranteed bonds. His conception of finance is to borrow money to meet the growing indebtedness of the community. He has no idea of the relation between the public debt and the public welfare. He does not appeal to the people to help themselves. Government to him is legislation; legislation a means of getting votes. It is a beautifully simple creed worthy of the old-time gambler. But the old times have passed away and with them, may it be hoped, will eventually pass the political gambler. It is time for straight forward, honest government. It is possible for politics to be free from the taint of patronage. The pettiness of patronage and politics as played by the men of Mr. Bowser's type is so disgusting, so utterly out of keeping with the spirit of the times, that surely the elecorate of British Columbia will insist that he shall not be allowed to guide the destinies of the people during the crucial times ahead.

The Skull and Cross Bones of Railway Construction

DUMAS made the Three Musketeers famous. British Columbia, not to be outdone by a romanticist, has made them rich. Dumas christened his heroes D'Artagnan, Aramis and Porthos. British Columbia did not christen hers—she dowered them. Long ago their parents christened them Timothy Foley, Patrick Welsh and Jack Stewart. Ireland and Scotland, optimism and canniness, a Celtic combination which never shrinks under any circumstances, even when it undergoes a public washing. Dumas' Three Musketeers were road contractors to the great Cardinal Richelieu—that is to say they did most of their business on the roads of France. British Columbia's Three Musketeers are contractors to anyone who will make a contract with them. They do business on the railroads of British Columbia. D'Artagnan, Aramis and Porthos used their swords, Foley, Welch and Stewart their wits, which command a higher price in these material days than swords were able to obtain in the days of Richelieu. The great difference between Dumas' Three Musketeers and British Columbia's famous trio is that Cardinal Richelieu guaranteed them bonds if they did not succeed in carrying out their contracts with him. British Columbia guarantees bonds for Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart as long as they succeed. If they fail British Columbia receives the bonds as a kind of decoration for folly. However that is a mere detail—so let us to our tale.

THE TRUE ARTIST

The construction of railways in British Columbia is an art, and as such not properly appreciated by that section of the public which, not being in politics, believes it to be a business. Real art is not realism, but illusion. The true artist does not attempt to reproduce Nature, but to interpret it according to his genius. In the same way the true railway contractor does not attempt to build a railway but to promote it according to his genius. Having promoted it he graciously allows the public to construct it under his guidance. A very excellent illustration of the real art of railway building is provided by the Pacific Great Eastern railway, which is popularly supposed to run from Vancouver to Fort George. It does not run, it halts until the public comes to its aid with stimulants in the shape of money. The process by which this illusion of running is created is common to all latter day railway construction in Canada. The artistic contractors project a railway. They select a picturesque route and an enthusiastic government. Between the two the country is opened up. Incidentally so is the public treasury. It is a very interesting process, well worth analysing.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

Behold then the three musketeers, an enthusiastic government, a full treasury, and a tract of land some four hundred and fifty miles in length. At one end of this tract is the progressive city of Vancouver, at the other the future city of Fort George. The missing link is the railway which will unite in indissoluble interest bearing bonds these various and varied interests. It is necessary to state that the three musketeers were not the only heroes ready to open up the country for public service. For a considerable period prior to their appearance on the scene it had been recognised that the head of Howe Sound being tidewater, provided exceptional facilities for transportation. Moreover, there were large tracts of timber, thousands of acres of arable land such as Pemberton Meadows—beloved of the settler, but like most beloved things, hard to obtain—and innumerable mining prospects, all of which might well need transportation to markets. All that was needed was to bring this natural wealth to tide-water and for that a railway was a necessity. Certain far sighted business men of Vancouver had for a considerable time been interested in this problem and having acquired timber licenses and land in the ordinary way, had built from tide-water ten miles of railroad, at their own expense. Premier McBride on February 13, 1913—those who are superstitious will note the conjunction of the fatal number 13—stated that several "large organizations had interested themselves in linking up Vancouver and Fort George by a line of railway—the contract with Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart had been made in the general public interest." Obviously so; the interest of the public is quite genuine, it has just amounted to over $300,000 this year.

WHY WORK FOR OTHERS?

But presumably these large organizations were not considered sufficiently artisitic to construct a railway on approved principles. To do this the government sought the aid of men who had proven themselves great artists, and thus naturally there appeared upon the scene the three musketeers whose names were a household word in

FOLEY—Is that Fort George I see before me?

STEWART—Nay, nay, that's a lang way awa'.

WELCH—Sure an' it'll be still further when I let the next contract for construction.

the annals of this peculiar art. Of the various adventures of these three there is not space to tell. The Grand Trunk Pacific, the Canadian Northern Pacific knew them well. To those railways, the three musketeers were contractors. That is they actually constructed portions of the lines under the aegis of others. This time they determined that others should construct the Pacific Great Eastern under their aegis. After all why should they work for others. If their experience had taught them anything, it was to be first on the ground—not railway ground but government ground. Art was concerned only with the letting of contracts and the promotion of railways. It had nothing to do with labor. If the government of British Columbia was willing—and its willingness had been tested by no lesser personages than those other great knights of the road, Mackenzie and Mann—why not take advantage of the situation? It looked like what is commonly known as a "lead pipe cinch"—and it was. The British Columbia government made its contract with Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart and at the same time recognized an agreement entered into by the three musketeers with the Grand Trunk Pacific Branch Lines Co., which gives that company an option of sixty days over the Pacific Great Eastern Railway in case any one [illegible] purchase same, and provides for the routing of all freight and passengers over the G. T. P. and vice versa. The deduction is simple. The Three Musketeers [illegible] contract for construction. The final result could be sold to the Grand Trunk Pacific at a nice profit, as the latter would naturally desire entrance to Vancouver. Thus the people of British Columbia were to pay for a railway built by the Three Musketeers who would sell it to a purchaser who was already in evidence.

THE CONTRACT

The exact procedure followed by these three [illegible] is a matter of small moment. The procedure is practically same in all cases. It consists of forming a company to build and operate a railway. Thus is born the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co., the directors of which are Messrs. J. W. Stewart, D'Arcy Tate, Timothy Foley, E. F. White, and Frederick Wilson. Of the three musketeers it will be noticed that only two are directors of the railway company which presumably must operate the road. The shareholders of the company are Timothy Foley, Patrick Welch, John W. Stewart, D'Arcy Tate, E. F. White, Frederick Wilson and the firm of Foley, Welch and Stewart. Talk about a Highland foray—from over the border! It was nothing to the descent of the Celt-American [illegible] bine on the innocent government of British Columbia. It is obvious that the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Company is merely Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart individually and individually. The government of British Columbia presumably deals with the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co., which would let the [illegible] contract for construction of the railway. Under [illegible] circumstances the company would call for tenders. But the circumstances are not ordinary. The company [illegible] its shareholders in solemn form seem to have let the contract to one of its shareholders, Mr. Patrick Welch who strange to relate was an individual in this case [illegible] parently refused to be associated with his firm or fellow shareholders in the matters. He had other things to [illegible] He was the bookmaker or commission agent who took the bets of the sub-contractors on the course of the railway.

THE SUB-CONTRACTORS

Apparently no less than thirty-six firms [illegible] as sub-contractors of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. To these thirty-six firms are attached fifty names. Of these fifty names, twenty-six are the same. The name of Wilson appears in two different firms of sub-contractors. There is a Frederick Wilson named as a director of the railway company. The name of Welch appears in four different firms, once under the initials J. A. Welch. Stewart appears in one firm. Foley [illegible] why sub-contractors should not take different contracts for different parts of the line with different partners. The real matter of interest is the method of letting these contracts. Were they let by tender or were they awarded to certain firms? If they were awarded who had the choice of certain portions of the line? It might be far easier to construct one five or ten mile section than another. According to the information given by the government, the contract was not let at a price per mile but at unit prices for the various kinds of work performed and material moved. By this information it would appear that the original contract for construction was let on this basis. Rock work is more profitable than the unit system than straight grading. Favored contractors can choose the most profitable kind of work. These matters, however, have really very little to do with the art of railway building. They are the sordid details of business which are more or less wearisome and unromantic. Yet to really appreciate art it is necessary to know something of technique. There is more to letting sub-contracts than appears on the surface, as may become apparent a little later.

THE AMATEUR RAILWAY BUILDER

The amateur who has no training and no technical knowledge of the art of railway construction, or the art of politics, would be inclined to proceed on very simple lines. He would place himself in the place of a government which, stirred to action by the clamor of the populace, determined to construct a railroad from Vancouver to Fort George. Knowing nothing whatever about the construction of rail- [illegible] to engage the services of an engineer of re- [illegible] lay out the route and estimate [illegible] ernment was able to engage [illegible] new waterways in Mesopo- [illegible] shed Canadian engineer, Sir [illegible] would be quite capable of [illegible] government. The amateur, [illegible] obtained the services of [illegible] port and on reviewing it, [illegible] great work he was about [illegible] report would state that [illegible] $13,000 a mile to con- [illegible] estimate the probable [illegible] which the proposed [illegible] the amateur to [illegible] would also [illegible] to commence at [illegible] and that it would cost about [illegible] railway in the next [illegible]

THE AM[illegible]ANCIER

[illegible] ernment and, therefore, [illegible] resources of the pro- [illegible] ways and means. [illegible] to ascertain whether it [illegible] bond issue in London or New [illegible] such a flotation would be. [illegible] the credit of the provincial [illegible] and its natural resources vast. [illegible] a bond issue of from five [illegible] per cent. discount and four [illegible] would take a sheet of [illegible] would complete his first year's [illegible] lion dollars and that he would [illegible] even better terms later on if [illegible] develop as expected, and the [illegible] hat the railway was being con- [illegible] is. Having obtained $5,880,- [illegible] amateur would turn to Sir Percy and [illegible] ahead and construct the railway. The latter by this [illegible] having been engaged as engineer by the [illegible] would have purchased the necessary plant — which is not very expensive or complex—and carefully [illegible] the question of labor. In the latter case he would have the help of the amateur, who being the government, would know all about labor conditions.

THE AMATEUR AT WORK

In due course Sir Percy would pitch his various camps, and the amateur being desirous of constructing the railway as cheaply as possible, would appoint a sanitary engineer and medical officer for the whole construction, who would in turn have their own staff. In each camp there would be a general store where the amateur would sell such things as the men desired at a price which would cover the cost of running the store. The amateur realising that the men on the work were human beings, would also construct a large building in each camp where they would be able to read, or write, play cards, and generally

enjoy themselves when their day's work was done. This would be in addition to the ordinary sleeping and eating quarters. Probably being an amateur and therefore a fool, he would also endeavor to stimulate the interest of the men in the work by various competitions and extra rewards. He would shock the moral susceptibilities of great many people by making the building of the railway something of a sporting proposition among the workers, this gang against that gang and so on. It is easy to see that the amateur is one of those foolish persons who believes in putting himself in the place of the worker and treating him accordingly.

THE POSSIBLE RESULT

However, the amateur having once started on this extraordinary and altogether unheard of career, would be very difficult to pull up. He and his dear Sir Percy would probably find at the end of the year that they had constructed 175 miles of railway at a cost of $5,250,000, having added 25 miles to their estimates and saved some $5000 a mile on the cost of construction. This may seem a slightly optimistic forecast but your real amateur is always an optimist and simply judges such things by the experience of others. "But," cries the gentle reader—by the way why is the reader always gentle?—"whoever undertook any government work in such fashion?" The amateur would probably retort that most civilised governments proceeded in such fashion; that Sir Percy Girouard himself worked under Lord Kitchener in Egypt, in similar style and that even the government of the United States constructed the Panama Canal under such circumstances. Of course the amateur would admit that if the experience of others is to guide such a very wise and excellent government as is installed at Victoria, there would be no profits for contractors and such a condition of affairs is unthinkable.

THE GOVERNMENT METHOD

But what an amateur might do and what a government combined with an artistic contractor can do, are two entirely different things. Let us disregard for a few moments our three musketeers and jog along the ordinary route pursued by most gentleman of the road, whose methods hardly vary at all. So commonplace have these methods become that it is feared the various governments existing all over Canada have formed a habit of which none of them can get rid. It must always be remembered that lawyers are great on precedent and that if the government of Nova Scotia does something wrong and is not found out, the wrong is established as a permanent excuse. The discovery of the wrong is merely an incident which warns others to be more careful in covering the trail. So the government which wants to build a railway negotiates with certain well-known gentlemen whose success in railway contracting has given them fame and wealth. That is going by precedent. The general recipe for construction follows—anyone can use it if they have a good cook in a well-equipped political kitchen as a personal friend.

RECIPE FOR BUILDING RAILWAYS

Take a large section of country, as new as possible and draw a line anywhere across it. If someone else has already done this it makes no difference, except in the color of your line. Then call on the nearest government and ask for guaranteed bonds. All governments keep a large stock of these. They are the commonest produce. Be ready to sign any agreement requested. It makes no difference what you sign if you only make sure that the lawyer who represents you is a partner of the lawyer who represents the government. Having secured the necessary guaranteed bonds, proceed to London or New York and mix them as quickly as possible in the money market. They will come out dough. The exact weight or amount is not of much importance, but for the sake of clarity it may be as well to use $10,000,000 of guaranteed bonds as an example and basis on which to commence cooking. These bonds would probably lose about $300,000 in the mixing process, which being accomplished, place the resultant $9,700,000 in your bank account and take the first boat or train back whence you came. On arrival at once form a company with yourself as president. You knead the presidency with the dough which you have produced. Place this dough of $9,700,000 in the oven of the company, first extracting $970,000 with which to cover travelling expenses and commission for securing the necessary material for further proceedings. Thus the ovens of the company receive $8,930,000, which must be left to warm for some days. It will rise to a contract in your name for the construction of a railway. The dough will have lost about 5 per cent. in this process, so that you will receive $8,483,500 with which to proceed. (As president of the company you will receive a large share of this loss in weight, so there is no need to worry about it. In fact the whole idea is to make the ultimate dish as light as possible. It requires deft handling at times, especially during the kneading periods. The more you knead the more you can sweeten with guaranteed bonds — but it necessitates care).

THE DOUGH CONTINUES LOSING WEIGHT

You now have a contract, a company and a large dough which has lost no less than $1,516,500 in the foregoing process. At least $1,250,000 of this should be locked up in your private store room in case you are ever in danger of starvation. The next step is to form yourself into a contractor and multiply yourself as many times as is convenient, by adding different partners to yourself. Partners may be plucked from your company singly or in couples. When you have used up your own name and those of your partners, let them repeat the process. If there are not enough of you to take contracts for all the profitable portions of the work, friends will always oblige. This rather complicated process will probably lighten the original dough of any odd weight. Thus from $8,483,500 it will probably be reduced to $8,000,000, but you have added the three letters sub to your title of contractor and multiplied it at least a score of times, which is a costly business. Sprinkle the $8,000,000 evenly over all. To maintain the flavor now add an employment agency, and get 5000 horny handed sons of toil, charging each one a dollar for the honor of being "gotten." Then add a doctor, of the family or partner brand, and take a dollar a month from each man for medical attendance. That means $60,000 a year from 5000 men. This portion of the process is very profitable if carried out properly. The harder you can make the conditions of labor the more men will be constantly leaving you and every change of this kind means another dollar for the employment agency and another to the doctor.

THE STATION-MEN

Get large quantities of good food and sell it to the men at five dollars a week, or $250 a year per head, or a total of $1,500,000 a year. By adding a good trustworthy wholesale grocer to your combination, you will get a better flavor. There, however, are garnishings which can be added according to taste. Then secure station-men, they are easily found, and allow them to make gangs out of your 5000 men, putting the gangs to work on the construction of the railway and making them as discontented as possible in order to keep changing men. The more discontented they are the more likely they will change, which means more money. Your contract with the station-men provides that they buy all their supplies, tools, everything through you. You charge them ten per cent. above the invoice price and ten per cent. for handling, so that they may appreciate the great privilege. When the station-men have finished their portion of the work, hand them an account showing that they owe you a certain sum of money, $5,000 or $10,000 is not too much, for wages, supplies, etc. If they object see that your lawyers are still in partnership with the attorney-general. The government may inspect the sub-contractors work from time to time, but as you yourself are concerned with all the profitable sub-contracts, there is no need to worry. The government engineer's report will agree with yours. If you find you owe the station-man anything — the recipe is wrong and you, as a sub-contractor, must go into liquidation as quickly as possible, beginning over again from the time the contract was added. The station-man has no money to follow you back as far as that so he loses anyhow.

REPEAT THE DOSE

Supposing, however, all goes well and the station man sweetens the pot, you are well on the way to turning out

the finished product. It is as wet, so proceed slowly with the whole recipe, for while it continues to simmer it becomes richer all the time. Don't let it boil over, it makes a nasty mess and is due to carelessness. If it does not seem rich enough to your taste after a year or so, add guaranteed bonds as often as possible. If by any mischance the government you originally obtained them from has changed and the new government has none for you in stock — the recipe is really spoilt for good. Throw up the whole thing, go into liquidation at once and shrug your shoulders. You have no further interest in the matter. Probably the country was not as new as you expected. Purchase a large country house in Scotland and a town house in London and go in for society.

(N.B.- This recipe is quite genuine, though it can be varied according to taste and the nature of the government. It will be noticed that it depends on guaranteed bonds for its entire success. If these are not forthcoming the dough which is the basis of the whole dish, will not rise).

THE GENERAL OUTCOME

That is the real art of railway construction. It is simply carelessness on the part of the contractor if any sub-contractor not immediately connected with the original contractor or company makes money. The sub-contractor who is not in the inner circle usually finds he owes money to the contractor from whom he has to buy everything. Part of his contract is the purchasing of supplies through the contractor. Eggs, meat, everything down to matches must be bought from the contractor's store, which usually charges ten per cent. for handling and at least another ten per cent. on the invoiced price. Heaven, the contractor and his friend, the wholesaler, alone know how much profit the invoice price may really signify. In this manner, if you cannot work out the cost of construction on any portions of the line you choose at any price you choose, you better get out of the contracting business. The whole art of contracting is to skim all expense on to the shoulders of those who do the actual work and not allow any possible profit to slip through your fingers anywhere. The money spent is not yours, you do not even have to pay the interest on it, unless you consider it ultimately profitable to do so. The railway thus constructed should belong to you if you care to have it, but you will not care. Operating a railroad under such circumstances would not be profitable. It is better to allow it to be reorganized.

THE PACIFIC GREAT EASTERN

As far as our three musketeers are concerned they could not be blamed if they took advantage of the circumstances and constructed the Pacific Great Eastern Railway on the [illegible] recipe. Undoubtedly the cost of construction in parts extremely heavy. As Attorney-General [illegible] declared three years ago, it might cost [illegible] $125,000 per mile in portions, especially that of the [illegible]. Therefore, the three musketeers [illegible] have not attempted [illegible] over White Clay at the entrance to Howe Sound. According to charter, the company was [illegible] capital of $25,000,000, that is, of $33,333 per mile; borrowing powers of $27,000,000, [illegible] $36,000 per mile. The government guaranteed the principal of $15,750,000 and interest at 4 per cent., or $630,000 per annum, which [illegible] $35,000 per mile since [illegible] $42,000 per mile at 4 1-2 per cent. interest. In return it received a first mortgage over the whole line and a personal bond from Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart of $250,000 in securities. Three years ago Premier McBride asserted the people the line would be completed in two years. The road of course is as usual to be blamed for the delay. As a general scapegoat the war beats anything. It will [illegible] ever conceived. The railway in addition to the guarantees mentioned, received a right of way grant of 100 feet in width through all crown lands as well as vacant crown lands necessary for the construction of siding stations, embankments, etc. Vacant crown lands were also granted for townsites at divisional points, consisting of 1280 acres at each divisional point and 640 acres at each other townsite.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

It is quite plain that railway contracting is a very high art, and a very profitable one under such circumstances. The operation of the railroad is another matter and it hardly concerns our three musketeers, as they have the agreement with the Grand Trunk Pacific which has been mentioned. The problem before the people of British Columbia was this. The Pacific Great Eastern or Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart wanted the people to loan them another $6,000,000 or so to complete the line. They are said to have already invested their own money to the tune of some millions, nine is the sum mentioned, in its construction. It is more than likely their personal investment is the $250,000 of securities already referred to. If they do not think the railway a profitable investment, would they have put up any of their securities? Possibly the security consists of common stock in the Pacific Great Eastern. Help! Yet it is obvious that under the usual recipe they might have made, or P. Welch, contractor, might have made, very large sums out of construction. Why should not the government of British Columbia complete construction itself? Why should it give Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart any more money either as a loan or as guaranteed bonds. Where is it to raise the sum required, which Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart, who will own the railway, are not willing to raise themselves? What has become of the securities given to the government by Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart? Why were not these used to pay for the defaulted interest of $316,000 paid in January by the people of British Columbia.

PHILANTHROPY OR BUSINESS?

Perhaps it is foolish to ask questions, but seeing that contractors are not in business for philanthropic purposes, why should the people give them more money out of which to make money? If the balance of the sum needed were to go direct to the station men or even to sub-contractors who actually did the work, no one would have cause to grumble. But when it filters from the company to the contractor and from the contractor to sub-contractors, and from them to other sub-contractors and so on down the whole grade, losing a certain percentage of its value all the time in friction caused by its passage from one pocket to the other, the absurdity of the situation is plain. A business government would tackle the situation in a business like way. In the first place the company and the three musketeers would have to produce their books and vouchers for all expenditure, which would be checked by independent auditors and engineers. The books of the sub-contractors would also be examined and their relationship to the contractor questioned. The profits of various stores would have to be known—in fact the whole series of operations would be subjected to searching analysis. By this means the exact cost per mile would be known and compared with the actual money expended. The government statement that its engineer estimates the cost of completing the line to Fort George at so much has nothing to do with the case. That apparently does not include the cost of the Howe Sound portion of the line, which, according to Premier Bowser, is likely to be the heaviest.

The Minister of Finance stated in the House one day that it would cost about $6,000,000 to complete the line, the next day the public is informed in reply to questions that to complete Vancouver with Fort George would cost over $[illegible].

AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT

It would be most interesting and profitable at such a time as this to make an experiment. Let the government undertake to complete the line and let the Three Musketeers advance the money necessary. Let us reverse the present position and see what happens. Surely the Three Musketeers between them can raise a paltry $6,000,000 from among their friends. Let the people of British Columbia accept such guaranteed bonds or securities as the Three Musketeers can offer and see whether they can make a profit out of the transaction. If the Three Musketeers can, why cannot the people of British Columbia? If the Three Musketeers cannot find the money necessary, why on earth should the people of British Columbia, having found the money, pay it into the coffers of the P. G. & E. railway? The people have not millions to throw away, why not hold what they have and spend it for

their own profit not for that of three gentlemen who, however excellent their original intentions, have not yet been able to pave the road to Fort George with steel. Granting that every detail of the work done in the past has been most efficiently carried out, it must also be granted that the contractors have not completed their contract and that in consequence British Columbia is forced to assume a liability which really should be shouldered by the contractors. Yet does anyone imagine that they have not made a profitable business of the contract? Eventually it looks as if British Columbia would have to foreclose and such a proceeding would complete the recipe given for railroad construction in every detail. But alas—it would also make an unsatisfactory ending to British Columbia's romance of Three Musketeers, and the public dislikes sad endings. For the sake of art it is better to sacrifice our own credit to maintain the reputation of three such gallant gentlemen of the road. Moreover, it would be a pity to prevent our business government publishing another comic section. Humor must be preserved at all costs in these somewhat dull days.

DO NOT BLAME CONTRACTORS

Remember the Pacific Great Eastern Railway is only an example of most efficient business management by a firm of contractors matched against the most inefficient business management of a government [illegible] to accuse the government of stealing the people's money and handing it over to the Three Musketeers. That sort of accusation could not be proved and there is no evidence to show that the members of the government responsible for the original contract were given any common stock or cash for making the contract. It is foolish to hurl such allegations at those who may be politically opposed to you. The railway was voted by the people of British Columbia and the government cannot be blamed for carrying out the demand of the electorate. [illegible] sheer stupidity of conducting business in such a fashion is surely apparent. It is the same all over Canada. The contractors make enormous profits out of everything but the actual construction which they only touch if they can make certain [illegible] to sub-contractors and [illegible] the [illegible] money voted [illegible] does not [illegible] in a [illegible] that [illegible] that they can be [illegible] to contribute very [illegible] towards the profits of the contractors. It is all rotten, rotten to the core and the government and everyone else is fully aware of its rottenness, but [illegible] Sometimes the public will [illegible] being dealt with in a business like way, and then these benefits of the road will disappear like other decorative figures of [illegible]

CHECKING THE CONTRACTORS

If a government believes a railway should [illegible] the contract is, the contract should be let [illegible] the terms of the contract published in full [illegible] is [illegible] who are only too willing to be [illegible] where he will place his tonsilites so that the [illegible] in on the ground floor, and they will exist [illegible] public benefactor. If [illegible] away as tonsilites, to the act of taking [illegible] [illegible]

How B.C. Rescued Foley, Welch and Stewart from Bankruptcy

As Told to the Provincial Legislature by that Most Excellent Story-Teller, William J. Bowser, and Translated by "Criticus"

THE AUDACIOUS MR. BREWSTER

ON May 15, 1916, the Hon. W. J. [illegible] attorney-general of British [illegible] Provincial Legislature to [illegible] from the wanton attacks [illegible] H. C. Brewster, whose insatiable [illegible] government's past. [illegible] lature at Victoria for the [illegible] whereas in the happy days [illegible] sidered ample for the completion [illegible] ster was recently elected by the [illegible] Liberal. He had the temerity [illegible] by the late premier, Sir Richard M[illegible] Bowser had apportioned to his [illegible] Mr. A. C. Flumerfelt. [illegible] toria did not see for once [illegible] returned Mr. Brewster to the legislature instead of Mr. Flumerfelt. No doubt Mr. Brewster was elated by his victory, and deemed he had a duty to perform [illegible] people who were so misled as to elect him. Duty is a stern master; Mr. Brewster [illegible] haps his conscientiousness is his excuse for [illegible] ness. Excessive regard for duty may be urged in extenuation of his crime in moving a resolution calling for the criminal prosecution [illegible] ment of too much money [illegible] Railway. He dared to claim that the [illegible]

[illegible] HOLE PICTURE

[illegible]

strictly to the line, the work would have collapsed. Work would have ceased with only 18 miles of track between Squamish and Cheakamus down. The contractor would have lost $1,500,000 in stores, mostly in perishable goods, and probably a total loss. The money from the sale of government securities would have stayed in the bank and drawn 3 per cent. interest, while the government would have had to pay interest on bonds since July 1914. The road would have been in the hands of a receiver and Foley, Welch and Stewart in the bankruptcy court"—loud sobs from the members of the legislature—"leaving an incompleted road on the hands of the province. The security of the bondholders would have been very much impaired, and consequently the credit of the province would have suffered."

SPARE OUR BLUSHES

To think of it! The government, representing the people of British Columbia, rushed to the rescue of Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart. The premier himself says the firm was saved from bankruptcy. Could the people have allowed such a tragedy to take place? A thousand times no! Imagine the news flashed across the world in that awful summer of 1914. Foley, Welch and Stewart, contractors to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, to the government of British Columbia, principal shareholders in the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, bankrupt! And at such a time; with Ulster on the verge of rebellion over Home Rule; with the dark clouds of war rising on the horizon of Europe; with the United States fully absorbed in Mexico; with Yuan Shi Kai tenaciously clutching the presidency of China. Perish the thought! Whatever British Columbia has not done, whatever sins she has committed in the past, whatever burdens she may be called upon to bear in the future; she saved the firm of Foley, Welch and Stewart from bankruptcy in 1914. To her eternal credit let this stand whatever interest she may have to shoulder in consequence. Here was a firm of contractors who in their enthusiasm for construction; in their yearning desire to carry out work demanded by the people of British Columbia; in their generous philanthropy towards a government which had entered into a specific agreement with them; were on the verge of bankruptcy. They had so obviously trusted to the good faith of the government. They had signed an agreement which in their innocence of the extreme astuteness of the men with whom they were dealing, called for fulfilment. But they relied on the intention rather than the letter of the law. Could the government deceive them? Could it insist on fulfilment and leave them naked, stripped of all their wealth, in the bankruptcy court? It would have been indecent, shameless, a betrayal of trust, a base misuse of power. The government refused "to hew strictly to the line" and saved them. So we are spared our blushes at the spectacle of Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart standing in the bankruptcy court stripped of their all.

THE RAILWAY CHARTER

Remember this! According to the premier "When the Pacific and Great Eastern Railway was organized, Foley, Welch and Stewart had not only agreed to finance the construction of the railway, but had also given their personal guarantee to the province to complete the road, equip it, and to guarantee its continual operation for a period of 30 years, the lifetime of the bonds." Reckless fellows! As has been said in the previous article, but is repeated here for the sake of emphasis, according to the charter of the company, at the time this agreement was made in 1912, the "personal guarantee" was a personal bond from Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart of $250,000 in securities. By charter the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, not Foley, Welch and Stewart, was given an authorized capitalisation of $25,000,000, or, for 450 miles of railway, $55,555 per mile and borrowing powers of $27,000,000. The provincial government guaranteed the principal of $15,750,000 and interest at 4 per cent—afterwards raised to 4 1-2 per cent. in February 1913—which equals $35,000 per mile, afterwards raised to $42,000 per mile, in 1914. In return it received a first mortgage over the whole line, and the bond referred to above. The provincial government gave the guarantee to the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co. The bonds secured by the mortgage are presumably issued to that company. If Foley, Welch and Stewart do not complete their agreement for the construction, equipment and operation of the line, they evidently forfeit their bond of $250,000, and the government can on its mortgage take over the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co. But surely this should not bankrupt Foley, Welch and Stewart, whose sole interest seems to be their $10,000 in the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co., and their bond of $250,000.

RAILWAY COMPANY OR CONTRACTORS

Again, according to the premier, "in October, 1912, the railway company issued to Foley, Welch and Stewart $25,000,000 of paid up stock. This was all the stock which had ever been issued." Individually and co-ordinately Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart are the shareholders of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. With them are associated Messrs. D'Arcy Tate, E. F. White and Frederick Wilson. So that the railway company issued to its principal shareholders $25,000,000 of paid up stock; said company being organised for a stock subscription of $100,000, of which $20,000 was paid up. The premier recalled that in May of 1915 the Pacific Great Eastern Railway had deposited $5,925,195 worth of bonds with the Union Bank and received only $4,800,000, having to give their personal guarantee as well as that of the government. It appears then that the Union Bank insisted on the government guarantee as well as that of the Pacific Great Eastern, or does the "personal" guarantee once more refer to Foley, Welch and Stewart? If not, did the Pacific Great Eastern hand over the $4,800,000 thus obtained to Foley, Welch and Stewart? As the latter received the total amount of bonds issued, it must be presumed that they returned nearly $6,000,000 worth, par value to the railway company, which hypothecated them with the bank under the guarantee of the provincial government. In return they received $4,800,000. Mr. Bowser stated that "the government had lent a million dollars by way of equity on the pledged bonds in the bank", this being the difference between the face value which they would have when times got better and the amount realised when they were hypothecated." If he refers to the advance made by the Union Bank, surely it is the bank and the government, which has the equity. Who is responsible for the bonds, the government, the Pacific Great Eastern or Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart? What at any rate are the bonds worth when Foley, Welch and Stewart are the operators of the railway?

THE TOTAL WORK DONE

But to proceed. The premier showed that "the last estimate given by the chief engineer of the total work done had been that of December 23, 1915, when he had reported that the total value of the work performed under contract had been $18,895,153. The government had advanced $18,029,895, leaving a balance back of $865,251." Mr. Bowser, according to the NEWS-ADVERTISER report, did not state whether this estimate of the work done was that of [illegible] the government's chief engineer. Assuming that it was the latter, what does "the total value of work performed" mean? If it means what it says, that portion of the railway equipped and finished as well as the grading completed and other work done has cost $18,895,153 up to the end of last year. But then Mr. Bowser proceeds, "There was also for buildings and water tanks, $150,000; rails purchased but not delivered, $111,514; telegraph lines, $5,000; Squamish road, $670,000," etc., "which with other similar sums aggregated $4,902,404, an amount which was to the credit of Foley, Welch and Stewart and Patrick Welch and which was added to the government's security." If these items are not included in the total work done, Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart and Mr. Patrick Welch have most generously performed a great deal of work amounting to almost $5,000,000 worth, which the chief engineer has not seen fit to include in his estimate. These items are evidently separate from the work done by the contractors for the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co., as that company owes these amounts to the firms mentioned. If they are not part of the total work done, for which $18,029,895 has been advanced, they must be additions to the accomplishment of the contractors. Thus really $23,022,299 worth of work has been done.

SECURITY OR SECURITIES?

But where, oh where is the additional security to which the premier refers? What security has the province beyond the first mortgage on the road and the personal bond of Foley, Welch and Stewart for $250,000 in securities. The railway company has issued $25,000,000 worth of bonds, to construct the railway. If it had issued $100,000,000 worth, the security would surely be the same. Just because the contractors have generously done nearly $5,000,000 worth of work for which they have not been paid by the railway company, does that make the road when completed more valuable? As Mr. Bowser said in the summer of 1914, if the government had not released the proceeds of the bonds, Foley, Welch and Stewart would have been in the bankruptcy court. It will worry the people of the province if all this extra money has been expended on their railway without adequate security to the contractors. The latter, however, with childlike simplicity, put their faith in governments. If Mr Brewster and his inquisitive friends had their way, this faith might be shaken. The present government should not have allowed Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart to risk their money in this fashion, even though they did make an agreement—"when conditions were quite different" to finance the railway company, which they own. But there is more to come. Mr. Bowser states that "of the $9,000,000 which the railway men had themselves invested, over $2,000,000 was spent in interest on their bonds. Between two and three millions was in townsites, and the government had the personal covenant of the men who owned the Pacific Great Eastern Development Company, so that it would be fair to assume that these properties would be additional security for the province." Glory be! Here's another $4,000,000 additional security coming out of the clouds. Is it quite fair to assume Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart, Mr. Patrick Welch and now the Pacific Great Eastern Development Company are the fairy godmothers of British Columbia? Are they business men or philanthropists?

THE MAGICIAN'S WAND

Really such generosity is appalling. Mr. Bowser conjures up securities from the illimitable depths of the pockets of these confiding gentlemen like a magician. Nothing so wonderful has ever occurred before. If one company is not sufficient, behold another. Who, what, where, why, the Pacific Great Eastern Development Company? And it has been thought Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart and Mr. Patrick Welch were hard headed business men out to make money. The Pacific Great Eastern all through the interior is known as "Pat Gets Everything." What a libel—what an outrageous insinuation. Why, here, in cold, hard figures, which cannot lie, we find that these gentlemen of the road, the Three Musketeers of British Columbia, have put up $9,000,000 cash out of their own pockets in order to carry on the work they had agreed to finance, equip and operate. Nine million dollars! Good heavens, no wonder the [illegible] to be held back from the abyss of bankruptcy into [illegible] they were so recklessly plunging. Really the government must not take advantage of them like this. It is obvious they do not know what they are doing. $9,000,000 [illegible] and above the $18,029,895 the province has advanced, makes $27,029,095 worth of work done, or equipment paid for, at cost of operation. And the government has it all secured to itself! Poor, poor Foley, Welch and Stewart; poor Mr. Patrick Welch; poor Pacific Great Eastern Development Company! Surely now at last the people of British Columbia realise what is being done to them—no, for them. Imagine what would happen now supposing the government refused to advance them another $6,000,000 to complete the job. Good heavens! They would be precipitated over the abyss which threatened them before and the people would be left with an incompleted railroad on their hands.

THE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

In order to thoroughly realise the risk the contractors have taken on the assumption that we would always keep faith with them, it may be as well to analyse some of the items of which this $9,000,000 is composed. Mr. Bowser's figures were evidently taken from a similar statement to that published in the British Columbia Financial Times, which set forth "the necessity and reasonableness of the Province of British Columbia giving aid to the Pacific Great Eastern Railway." First, it must be clearly understood that we are dealing with four companies, to wit:

The Pacific Great Eastern Railway;
Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart;
Mr. Pat Welch;
The Pacific Great Eastern Development Company.

The statement shows "detailed expenditure to December 31, 1915, on Pacific Great Eastern Undertaking," and is obviously official. Herein we find an item.

Foley, Welch and Stewart. Cash and supplies for work and Development Co., $2,417,280.52.

This evidently means that Foley, Welch and Stewart have paid out "Cash and Supplies for work" as some part of this sum, while the balance has been advanced to the Development company. This company seems to be a real estate company which has invested, according to Mr. Bowser, between two and three millions—there is a delightful vagueness about the sum in townsites. The men who own this Development Company are "wrapped in mystery." Presumably they are Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart. Whatever sum these gentlemen have invested in these townsites is shown as part of the sum included on the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. In the same statement, under the head P. Welch, Contractor, there is

P. Welch. Advance to Development Company, $794,000.00.

A little later there is another item.

Less: Value of Right-of-Way through Development Company lands, $858,073.00.

The right-of-way for the railway is believed to consist of 8 acres to the mile. There are 450 miles of railway, so that there are 3,600 acres for the right-of-way. Are these 3,600 acres valued at $858,073.00. At $100 an acre they would be worth $360,000. As a matter of fact, they probably would not fetch $20 an acre today.

THE RIGHT WAY OR RIGHT-OF-WAY

If the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Company owns the right-of-way through these lands, it seems to be credited with $858,073.00. Supposing that "between two and three millions" is estimated at $2,500,000. If the Foley, Welch and Stewart item of $2,417,280.52 referred to is divided as $2,000,00 to the Development Company and the balance to cash and supplies for work, we find a total of $2,794,000 from Foley, Welch and Stewart and Pat Welch and a credit to the Pacific Great Eastern of $858,073, or a total of $1,935,927 on the Development Company. Thus the security [illegible] between two and three millions is lessened by the credit to the Pacific Great Eastern, which is already secured by a mortgage. This surprises that Foley, Welch and Stewart have placed all but $417,280 into real estate. Of course this assumption can only be based on the information given and it proves how absolutely [illegible] that information is. The Development Company is such a private speculation in townsites. There [illegible] about 12 miles of railroad purchased from the [illegible] Northern Railway, at a sum [illegible] Pat [illegible] also started by [illegible] the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, "Vacant crown lands for townsites at divisional points, consisting of 1280 acres at each divisional point, and 640 acres at each other townsite." Has the Development Company any interest in these townsites? That would seem impossible, for otherwise Foley, Welch and Stewart and P. Welch could hardly charge the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co. with these sums and allow Mr. Bowser to assume they were part of the $9,000,000 invested by these gentlemen in the construction of the railway. Mr. Bowser, however, mentions townsites valued at between two and three millions which belong to the Development Co., and are according to him, part of the province's security. What [illegible] does the government then with the Development Co.? It is as well to know these things, because the people do honestly desire, in Mr. Bowser's words, "to be lenient in cases such as these." What price did the Development Co. pay the Railway Company for these townwsites which were given by the people to the latter?

SOME OTHER ITEMS

Among other items of this $9,000,000 it is interesting to note:

Foley, Welch and Stewart, equipment furnished, $426,022.26.

Under "P. Welch, Contractor," are all sorts of items, some of which Mr. Bowser mentioned in his speech. "Wagon Road for construction purposes, $137,588.24. Equipment and Horses, $100,000. Supplies on hand, $240,000," and so on.

As has been said, these evidently cannot be included in "work done." But they might be included under Contractor's Plant—if there were such an item. Horses, for instance, are surely plant on capital account of any contractor. But Mr. Welch has thrown them in and they are included in the $9,000,000 spent. If they were sent off to some other contract, presumably they would still be part of the security owned by the government. The construction of a wagon road by a contractor is evidently not part of the necessary "work done" under the engineer's estimate. The wagon road is necessary to construction and is apparently an asset, for it is reckoned as part of the security. No doubt Mr. Welch when he risked so much in taking the contract from the Pacific Great Eastern Railway did not reckon on having to construct roads, and, therefore, would not estimate for such things. He evidently relied on the good faith of the government. The Pacific Great Eastern Railway company seems to have "soaked" its shareholder, Mr. Pat Welch. He even has had to supply rolling stock for the railway to the extent of $670,160.68, and yet, by the agreement between the government and Foley, Welch and Stewart, the latter operate this rolling stock. Poor Mr. Welch—everyone will sincerely hope he will get his $670,160.68 back from them, more especially as it is said that this rolling stock now carries a label showing the ownership of the Pacific Great Eastern Development Co., or yet another company called the Pacific Great Eastern Construction Co.

THE SUB-CONTRACTOR'S LOSSES

But, unfortunately, Mr. Welch has suffered a definite and terrible loss. He took this contract in good faith, and yet another item shows he is out $1,085,069.38 on sub-contractor's losses. These losses are still part of the government's $9,000,000 security. Now how can such things be allowed? Mr. Welch lets sub-contracts to various people, and they let him in like this. It is abominable. He supplies them with everything from a tin tack to a donkey engine. He allows the sub-contractors to have the advantage of buying everything from him. He can feed them, clothe them, house them, and for all these services would only charge a small percentage over and above what the actual cost is to him, just for running expenses—say 20 per cent, or so. And then after doing all this, he loses over a million dollars. He takes a contract for the construction of the line from the Pacific Great Eastern. He does not tender for it, it is let to him because—oh, well just because. The price? Never mind, but for the sake of argument, say $2.00 a yard. He then lets out contracts just to give others a chance. Perhaps some contracts are let at $1.00 a yard. The sub-contractor may find he has taken the contract too cheaply, and when his work is done, discovers that he owes Mr. Welch for supplies or wages and that the work has cost him $1.50 a yard. Mr. Welch presumably says, "Never mind, old fellow, better luck next time," and pocets his loss. Well, then he must lose at least 50c a yard with the contractor, but although he apparently gets $2.00 a yard from the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co. It's all dead loss, loss of nerve, loss of time, loss—oh, why ever did he go into the contracting business. Over a million dollars loss which the railway company must apparently pay out of its guaranteed bonds! It's tragic, it's brutal, to wonder the abyss of bankruptcy stared- let a veil descend over the moving picture—very much censored by the premier's refusal to investigate.

TIES AND PILES

For ties the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Company had paid out by this account, $396,765.48. Perhaps both Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart, as well as Mr. Pat Welch, include a portion of the cost of ties under the head of equipment. "P'raps they do, p'raps they don't, p'raps, p'raps not," as R. G. Knowles would say. Now supposing that a sub-contractor cut the ties and delivered them on the work at 25c each. They would be inspected and great care taken to ascertain they were decent ties. The indecent ties would be rejected, and the sub-contractor—serve the fellow right—would depart possibly out of pocket. A second inspection might prove that most of the rejected ties were, after all, ties, and, as such, useful. It would be a shame to waste them, so why do so? No doubt they would then be credited to the departed sub-contractor and charged to the Pacific Great Eastern Railway at a small profit—say 50c a tie. Inspection by the government engineer would prove their value and naturally it costs something to put them in place and tack steel to them.

Or consider such things as piles for a wharf. A sub-contractor might deliver them at 8 1-4c per lineal foot. Driving these piles might cost anything from 15c to 25c a foot. On the other hand they might be charged to the P. G. E. by the contractor to whom they were delivered as very expensive piles brought from a long distance and cost, delivered on the work, 35c a foot, while driving them, if the work were specially trying, might cost 50c a foot. They should be creosoted owing to the prevalence of teredos. But that process might add very greatly to the expense.

There are so many possibilities besides teredos and other destructive influences attached to ties and piles. There must be some small profit allowed for the contractor somewhere, and no one can blame him for getting the best price possible for his supplies. After all, the work must be inspected and passed by the government before money is advanced to the railway company. Thus, of course, the people are amply secured and protected by the government engineer! Oh! of course!

OPERATING EXPENSES

Some portion of this line has been open for time. The hard winter, as Mr. Bowser explained, interfered with the working of the railway, and it is said the new plough borrowed from another railway company for the purpose of clearing the line of snow, was too large to operate properly. The other company had no business to have such a large plough. Yet, despite these handicaps, Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart have been operating portions of the line as best they can. Mr. P. Welch, according to this statement, spent no less than $480,106.71 on cash and supplies for operating the line. This item is also included in the $9,000,000 investment. The line from North Vancouver to White Cliff carries quite a number of passengers in the summer. Yet the statement shows no revenue from operation. Perhaps it is already deducted from [illegible] and the $480,106.71 is a net charge.

THE DIFFICULTY OF BOOKKEEPING

As has been said, it is only possible to speculate regarding these items. It may be wrong to imagine that there is [illegible] anywhere for the contractor. The trouble lies with the statement, and judging by the summary given, there must be quite a lot of bookkeeping between the four companies. This is a additional difficulty which faces the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart, Mr. Pat Welch and the Development Company. It is unfair to judge the work by the statement, because the statement shows so little and the accounts must be most complicated. No doubt, under the circumstances the best possible has been done, to give the public information which the curious Mr. Brewster so ardently desires. Even if more detailed statements were given, would the public understand them? Bookkeeping is a science, and the generality of people are not scientific. Yet seeing that according to Mr. Bowser, British Columbia owes Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart from bankruptcy, it would perhaps be wise to save them from themselves and go very carefully into all their accounts.

STRONG HOPES

Mr. Brewster demanded such an investigation by Royal Commission. Premier Bowser, however, must be credited with fully understanding the statements which have been rendered to the government. He says that all is well, so surely Mr. Brewster should be satisfied. It has been

suggested in a previous article that if any further sums were necessary to complete the line, the government itself should relieve the contractors of further responsibility and finish the line with its own money. Premier Bowser rushed legislation through the house for the purpose of lending another $[illegible],000,000 presumably to the Railway Company, which, no doubt, will lend it to Messrs. Foley Welch and Stewart, who may possibly lend it to Mr. P. Welch. It is absolutely necessary that the line be completed. The people demand it and the line is useless and a liability until it is finished. If it will cost $6,000,000 to complete the Newpoit to Prince G[illegible] section, then that money must be found without delay. It apparently can only be found on the credit of the people of British Columbia. They are already paying [illegible] previous sums found. At the next session of the Dominion Parliament, it is understood the Pacific Great Eastern will apply for a subsidy of $12,000 per mile, and strong hopes are entertained by the P. G. E. of obtaining such assistance." Provision is made in the Pacific Great Eastern loan bill that the provincial government will have a first mortgage on these strong hopes as part of the security offered for the new Provincial government loan. The stronger the hope the better the secur[illegible] The province will live in hopes—if it will only re[illegible] Premier Bowser to power at the coming election. H[illegible] would the Conservative Dominion Government consider such a proposition if a Liberal government reigned at Victoria?

THE CONTRACTORS SAY GRACE

It is said ample security apart from these strong hopes has been given for the authorised loan. This security may be summed up as follows:—

(1) "A mortgage upon the road when completed." This was already provided in the original charter. "This mortgage to be second only to the claims of the bondholders."

Are not Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart the bondholders, or are they merely the bond disposers? The Union Bank appears to hold some of the bonds. Yet, according to the premier, "the government had over a million dollars by way of equity on the pledged bonds in the bank."

(2) "A first mortgage upon the townsites and terminals of the P. G. E. and Foley, Welch and Stewart." Under the charter, "Vacant crown lands are granted for townsites at divisional points, consisting of 1280 acres at each divisional point, and 640 acres at each other townsite."

Is the government then to receive a first mortgage on these crown lands which apparently it did own, but gave to the company, and which, in any case, should be covered by the first mortgage on the P. G. E.

(3) "49 per cent of the common stock of the P. G. E. and 49 per cent. of the common stock of the P. G. E. Development Co. This stock does not pass to the ownership of the province, but is put up as a security."

In view of 1 and 2, what is this security worth?

(4) "The P. G. E. will give a bonus to the province for the loan and assistance provided in the past of $2,000,000 worth of common stock. This will be owned outright." More scraps of paper!

For all of which Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart will no doubt be duly grateful and say grace.

"For what we have received and for what we are about to receive may the Lord of Folly at Victoria make us truly thankful. Amen."

The Government's Shipbuilding Legislation

LAST session there was introduced in the local legislature a bill to give aid to the shipbuilding industry on the coast, and to encourage the operation of ships and construct docks. The bill is of tremendous importance to the people of the province and is the government's reply to the demand of the public for shipping and a shipbuilding policy. It will be as well to consider the bill first from the purely business point of view, which, after all, is also the common sense point of view. It is difficult to make business interest [illegible] of the electorate. The public is divided into so many different sections by its [illegible] concerns comparatively [illegible] sense, because there are [illegible] no dry docks being operated by private interests, and there are only agents for the big steamship lines [illegible] to all the world over. Moreover, there [illegible] merchants. Most of the [illegible] gaged in the import trade. They have built up large businesses on domestic lines. There are only [illegible] lumber mills which have [illegible] these rely almost entirely [illegible] concerns for handling their export business.

LACK OF TONNAGE

Thus the men who understand anything about the shipping business can be numbered on the fingers of two [illegible] The government, however, [illegible] ponse to a demand for shipping which has been brought about by the lack of tonnage due to the war. There has sprung up in Europe an enormous demand for lumber. This demand will increase when peace comes, in order to make good the damage done as fast as possible. The lumber men at the coast state they are unable to obtain ships to carry the lumber. That is absolutely true, although it might be added — however [illegible] able the impeachment may seem—that hardly a [illegible] mills really know anything about export business [illegible] or, for the matter of that, to anywhere else. [illegible] is quite pla[illegible] Most of the mills have for the last few years been so busy with the domestic trade that they have neglected the export market and the mills to the south of them have consequently been able to capture almost the entire market.

THE GOVERNMENT PLAN

According to Mr. H. B. Thomson who introduced the bill to the attention of the house, it is "an honest effort to meet the situation." The bill provides for three things.

A. [illegible] for ships to be built in British Columbia to the extent of 55 per cent. of their value.

B. [illegible] $5.00 a ton for the deadweight capacity of the ship, for a period of ten years after peace is declared. No bonus would be paid in any year if its net operating income exceed 15 per cent. on the investment.

C. A guarantee of 55 per cent of the value of the property to aid the establishment of shipbuilding plants should it be necessary.

[illegible] per consideration of this bill must begin [illegible] with the last clause, which provides a guarantee of 55 per cent. on the value of property to aid the establishment of shipbuilding plants.

STEEL OR WOOD?

[illegible] as a matter of business fact, the plant or property necessary for the construction of wooden schooners for the lumber trade is to about $8,000, including the value of land. All that is necessary is to have a blacksmith's shop, a slip for launching, and lumber. There are already at least three plants able and willing to build ships if they could get the orders or the steel. It needs emphasising that there is no plant really necessary for building lumber schooners. Therefore the plant is necessary only for steel ships. Steel ships are not necessary for the lumber trade, and their cost of construction today, with steel at present prices, means that they will have to earn a high rate in order to pay interest on capital expenditure. Moreover,

every business man knows that steel is practically unobtainable, and will be unobtainable for a considerable period after the war stops. Small quantities probably could be and have been obtained, but the deliveries may be irregular.

IS IT BUSINESS LIKE?

As briefly as possible, those are the conditions through which the demand for shipping [illegible] to the front. It came at a [illegible] the government was [illegible] [illegible] ally, [illegible] the [illegible] politi[illegible] would [illegible] point. [illegible] in every way possible. The question is whether the present bill is business like and provides for the exportation of lumber, which is the real reason for its introduction. To [illegible] [illegible] eyes of [illegible] its [illegible] and spend it. If the truth were [illegible] it would probably be found that the same interests [illegible] [illegible] the framing of the bill, would also be responsible for the lending of the money, and that [illegible] railway construction in this province [illegible] [illegible] the people.

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS READY

However [illegible] [illegible] ledge all those resources at times like these, well—it is plain that they can be obtained on fairly easy terms.

SHIPBUILDING PLANTS

The establishment of shipbuilding plants is probably the best part of the bill for the promoter. From the public point of view it simply means that the wise man from the east can go to the government and obtain guaranteed bonds up to 55 per cent of the value of his real estate and proposed plant. He can take these bonds to the money markets in the east and sell them—at a discount, which discount is his first profit. He can then start construction [illegible] which really no special plant [illegible] sell that schooner if he finds it [illegible] better still, operate it through a sub- [illegible] this he can obtain 55 per [illegible] from the government on the value of [illegible] $5[illegible] a ton bonus.

Still the promoter must be considered. He is a picturesque person when he comes to deal with the "business government" at Victoria. First of all, he selects his site [illegible] he will select a valuable real estate [illegible] estate will be based on market [illegible] for the purpose. Being a [illegible] promoter he will hardly consider [illegible] unless it costs at least a million [illegible] it will cost $1,000,000, including the real estate. On that million he gets a government guarantee of $55[illegible],000 in bonds. He might raise $500,000 in cash on these bonds at six per cent, and pocket with his friends a little profit of $50,000. With the $500,000 he proceeds to let contracts for the construction of his dock. Now docks are of all sorts, and shipbuilding plants are of all sorts. The real necessity at the moment is a floating [illegible] $7[illegible]

THE VULTURES FLOCKING

[illegible] build docks because [illegible] opportunities as ship- [illegible] eliminate all idea of docks, [illegible] Dominion Government is [illegible] of the business and has a [illegible] Mr. Stevens has been [illegible] Mr. Spratt of Victoria, who was arranging with the Pacific Dredging Company [illegible] on the North Shore of Bur- [illegible] announced that he was ready to negotiate with the government for a plant at Victoria. [illegible] the feast. The promoter [illegible] a plant for building steel [illegible] he cannot build under [illegible] peddle guaranteed bonds [illegible] the dock or shipbuild- [illegible] of the guarantors. For a [illegible] unless it earns revenue [illegible] required for lumber vessels. [illegible] Therefore let the people of [illegible] any promoters desirous of [illegible] shipbuilding plan, which [illegible] they are able to obtain such [illegible] the business interests must [illegible] established are encouraged to [illegible] them guaranteed bonds. [illegible] business man who knows any- [illegible] get round it. That is why [illegible] that the provision for [illegible] shipyards is all humbug under [illegible] is only put there to try and [illegible] industry. What sort of security [illegible] a yard? The value of the [illegible] the property when ships can- [illegible] market conditions? If they could [illegible] established have had the [illegible] steel ships for the last year and [illegible] such construction because [illegible] the contracts. The government bill [illegible] That is only a pretence. [illegible] plant or docks, can be a [illegible] the word "promoter" to [illegible] the same thing. "A rose by any [illegible]

SHIPS FOR THE LUMBER TRADE

It is useless for the government to turn round and say that for the present such yards will be used to construct

wooden ships. That would add to the capital cost of the wooden ship by the overhead charges. But the promoter may want to build wooden ships in that yard and may point out to the government that the ships so built are ample security. Knowing our "business government," it may concede this point, but it will conveniently overlook the fact that it is already advancing 55 per cent. of the value of the ship to be constructed, and that is a first mortgage on the ship. The ship cannot be a security for the plant or the shipyard, because the value of the ship depends entirely on its earnings. It is a liability whenever it is tied up for want of freight. Here again the question of steel ships may be raised. Well, apart from what has already been said, steel ships will have to compete with the tonnage of the world. They cannot be built for over a year and probably would not be in commission by the time the war was over. Freights may be abnormally high now, but no one knows what they will be after the war is over, and to prove this the government is giving the $5 per ton bonus in order to give a security against any sudden drop in freights. It is perfectly obvious that the government bill is really for wooden, not steel ships, and wooden ships can under moder[illegible]itions be used only for lumber and not perishable goods. They might carry coal, but anything which must reach its market on time must be carried in large steel ships. Today the wooden ships owned by the lumber mills for the lumber trade and only for the lumber trade are what the government bill is providing. "Is not that an excellent thing? Will it not stimulate industry and the export of lumber?" you ask. Certainly it will, or rather it would, if the lumbermen built the ships in their own yards, and owned them and operated them at cost.

THE DELIVERY WAGON

Ay; but there's the rub. If the government had brought in a bill providing a guarantee of bonds to the value of 75 per cent. or even 80 per cent. of the vessel built, every lumber mill on deep water and interested in the export trade probably would have rushed to build wooden schooners. Such a high guarantee may seem absurd, but remember that the government argues today that the high rate of freight should pay the cost of the ship in two voyages. Not only that, but the ships under such circumstances would be built as cheaply as possible and according to government specifications if necessary, and the lumber mills would have paid for them, or rather got rid of the mortgage as soon as possible in order to operate the ships, as Mr. Thomson stated, like a delivery wagon. He said "British Columbia is in the position of running a grocery store, without any delivery wagon." Very true, but he forgot to add that the grocery operates its wagon at cost, and that the bill under which a Shipping Credits Commission is established cannot operate its ships at cost. The real compeititon to our lumber mills exporting comes from the south, where many of the lumber mills own their ships and operate them like "a delivery wagon." However, that will not suit the promoter through whom the government evidently expects to get the $2,000,000 cash on which the Shipping Credits Commission starts business. Ostensibly that money is provided for twenty ships, costing $100,000 each. At least that is the basis on which the NEWS-ADVERTISER worked. The promoter wants the 55 per cent. of the value of the ship in cash. He also wants the operating subsidy. For the sake of argument, we can take the NEWS-ADVERTISER'S figures. The promoter can obtain $55,000 in cash and build a ship worth $100,000. He will then have to put at least $45,000 of his own money into the ship, and will not own the ship, as the government has a first mortgage on it and can operate it until all the money expended is repaid. According to the NEWS-ADVERTISER, the ship so built will register 1200 to 1500 tons.

OPERATING THE SHIPS

Let us take the 1200 ton ship, not that the NEWS-ADVERTISER knows much about it, but because it gives these figures and therefore they are favorable to the government. A 1200 ton ship would have a deadweight capacity of nearly 3000 tons. The subsidy at $5 per ton would be $15,000 a year for ten years, or $150,000 in all. To operate the ship, it will have to be chartered to the lumber mill wishing to export lumber. It cannot engage in the coastwise trade, which presumably means it cannot export lumber to California or poles to Bellingham, and therefore cannot add to its earnings if the deep sea market happens to be slack. The lumber mill will therefore have to pay the owner of the ship a freight rate which must not be higher than the freight rate of ships chartered by San Francisco firms to American mills. But the promoter will get as high a rate of freight as he can, and if he does not, the Shipping Credit Commission must, in order to pay for the ship as soon as possible. In consequence, the lumberman will be up against exactly the same state of affairs as he is now. The ship will not be operated at cost, "like a delivery wagon," and like the ships of his chief competitors. While the export demand is good he may be able to ship his export lumber, but when the domestic market is good, he will attend to that once more and let the export market alone, merely because he will not choose to pay for the chartering of the ship on a trade which will not be so profitable to him as the domestic market. If he owned the ship he would continually be after business for it. It may be argued that a lumber mill has a perfect right to go to the government and ask for a 55 per cent. cash advance on a ship, and also obtain the operating subsidy later on. That is true, but the lumber mills were not advised of the bill and the agreement with "legitimate dockyard companies" for the construction of at least fifteen ships (and the present limit of the bill is twenty) was already believed to have been drawn up. It is said that not one lumber mill engaged in the export business was even asked to attend a meeting of the committee, which consisted of Messrs. McGowan, Thomson, Watson, M. Manson and Lewis Campbell, and unofficial advisor Mr. H. Brown, the wise man from the East.

THEP PEOPLE'S LIABILITY

But the "legitimate dockyard" company is in this position. It receives the money on guaranteed bonds, which for the sake of giving an estimate, may be taken as $550,000. It builds 15 ships at a value of $200,000 each, which amounts to $1,500,000, and in return receives in cash from the provincial government $825,000. The tonnage of the ships, at 3000 tons each, is 45,000 tons, and the bonus $5 a ton annually for ten years, or $2,250,000. Thus the liability to the provincial government on 15 ships under such circumstances would be for principal and interest, a little less than $3,025,000 over interest at six per cent. would be $217,500 a year, and the only real security available for the ships, which amount to $1,500,000. As a matter of fact, it is probable that the ships would cost nearly $150,000 each. The company could complete its 15 wooden ships without completing the docks or spending more than necessary to show a bona fide intention. The money raised on the bonds could meanwhile be used to pay for the balance of the construction account. It is not much use clinging to the belief that the Shipping Credit Commission will own the ships and operate them until every cent of the money advanced is repaid, for the simple reason that the Shipping Credit Commission will hardly be composed of experts, but of politicians who may be looking for a job—that is if we are to judge by the past. It will be another means of patronage, for which we have to pay the bill. Moreover, unless experts operate ships, as sure as fate the operations will prove unprofitable—and that is exactly where the "legitimate" interests come in. It is an absolute farce for the government to take over and operate the ships. Every shipping expert on the coast is already engaged as agent for or in the shipping business, and not one of them has been consulted over this bill, though many of them have written to the government when the matter was first mooted and Mr. Tisdall was inquiring into it, most of them stating that the government would be wiser if it did not jump to rash conclusions regarding the business. Thus the promoter is in a most enviable position. He can run three companies. The plant company, which can spend the bonds and hold back the balance of the plans as the time is not ripe for their fruition; the construction company, which gets a cash advance of 55 per cent. of the value of the ship; and the operating company, which gets the bonus on the tonnage.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

It is merely a mater of agreements between the three companies which any clever lawyer could draw up. The

shareholders of the operating company could take a sufficient number of shares in the construction company as a security and pay for them enough to cover the balance of the cost of the ship, with a margin for profit for the construction company. The public might be asked to subscribe for the operating company, which offers the best and easiest means of raising money for construction if the cash raised on the guaranteed bonds has been exhausted. If the ships can be operated profitably for a year or two, well and good, the government may be temporarily secured, and as Marie Lloyd used to say, "Everything in the garden's lovely." But if the operating is not successful because the lumber mills will not co-operate, will any one kindly state where the British Columbia government stands? The bill prevents the operating company chartering its vessels, when the lumber men in British Columbia refuse to pay the charter rate asked, unless the commission allows it to do so. Then the operating company have the privilege of competing in the freight market with Hind Rolph & Co., or Grace & Co. of San Francisco? If so, that is merely transferring our present liability from San Francisco to some eastern firm. The point is this: The whole security for the vessels must be in their operation and they must be operated by experts who know the business. As long as trade is good, all is well, but supposing trade falls off, the operating company, the construction company and the plant company can all go into liquidation and leave the people of British Columbia with the ships on their hands. Whereas if guaranteed bonds, even up to 100 per cent. of the value of the ship had been offered to a lumber mill, the government could have had additional security on the mill itself, and the mill at any rate would be able to operate the ship at cost, especially in the California market, which takes 300,000,000 feet annually and in which the lumbermen to the south fear our competition.

MORE EXTRAVAGANCE

The bill is launched, however, from political "ways," and its effect on the commercial and industrial interests has evidently been considered subsidiary to its effect on public opinion as a whole, which, truth to tell, regards all business from a purely superficial point of view, and does not follow a bill of this kind to its logical conclusion. Why should it? On its face the bill will attract shipbuilders and bonus shipping. It will mean the expenditure of large sums of money and the expenditure of money means the employment of large numbers of men and stimulation of the purchasing power of the community. It will also prove to the people how excellent is the credit of their government under the wise and beneficent control of Premier Bowser and his cabinet. It will therefore determine them to keep such an excellent "Business Government" in power, as it seems able to borrow large sums of money in the east, which are spent on constructive business in the west. Those who endeavor to show that the bill is merely applying the same principles of business to shipping as have been applied with such disastrous results to railways, will be called "knockers." Their arguments will be stigmatized as inaccurate, misleading, and, above all, unpatriotic. They will be told they do not understand conditions in British Columbia, and that in order to obtain revenue and pay our debts we must produce. But production on such a basis is merely adding to our already overwhelming liabilities. Later on, if the present government is still in power, when conditions are not quite as they seem at present from the shipping point of view, the excuse of the government will once more be that it has been extravagant, but the people demanded the legislation. If mothr government is in power it can be the scapegoat.

THE PITY OF IT

Do you see the pity of it all This bill gives a concrete instance of the utter inability of the government to look ahead and deal with matters in a business like way. Its conception of business is to stretch our credit to the utmost limit. Its idea of stimulating industry is to borrow money and scatter it broadcast. Its whole effort is to keep up an appearance of great prosperity. Its firm belief is that if it can only borrow sufficient money in this manner it can pull wool over the eyes of the people and regain the popularity it has lost. No one knows what the state of the shipping market will be after the war but if there is a legitimate speculation which may help the export lumber trade and build up our markets abroad, most people are quite willing to run the risk of the ships not paying—if only they are built on a proper basis. No one is against the principle of building ships, even if many people do doubt whether they will earn the money which they are expected to earn. But any business man would be against a bill which is so obviously drawn to make as good a showing as possible. It is a political, not a commercial bill, and British Columbia is already burdened with a political heritage which adds to our debts year by year. The government claims to be a business government, and yet sthl persists in borrowing money anywhere it can, so as to have largesse to bestow before election

"AN HONEST EFFFORT"

If this bill is the result of "an honest effort to deal with the situation," it is obvious that the present government's honest efforts are likely to prove extremely costly. Does the government know the conditions of the shipbuilding trade? Does it know that the German tonnage interned in various ports and which will be set free the moment the war ends—whoever owns it—is fully equal to all that has been lost by submarine warfare? Does it know that there are something like 800 ships of various sorts being constructed in the United States, and that Sweden, Denmark, Norway are all building ships? Surely it noticed that Great Britain alone has built enough tonnage since the war started to equal all which has been lost. At the end of five years—the period for which the loans run—what security has the government got if the loans have not been paid? When the security matures, what price will the ships fetch? There is all the difference in the world between helping the plants already established and assisting the lumber mills individually to build and operate wooden schooners and launching an immense speculation on exactly the same lines as the railway policies. It is hardly business like to stretch our credit at times like these to the utmost limit in order to attract another crowd of promoters anxious to pick up easy money. To build up the business gradually may be possible, and good business, but to rush into a huge shipbuilding and dockyard programme without adequate knowledge, hardly seems to be living up to the standard of a business government.

NOTE THE OUTCOME

Since the above was written, Messrs. H. B. Thomson, Frederick Bascombe and G. Goepel have been appointed members of the Shipping Board. There is no remuneration for their services. Not one of them has ever operated a ship in his life. They are really nothing but trustees for the money involved.

Also Mr James Carruthers of the Canada Steamship Lines Co. Limited, which is represented here by Mr. H. W. Brown as Messrs. H. Brown & Co., and is building several ships, has stated: "Our people have invested in the industry here about $1,500,000 on the strength of that legislation. So far as that legislation goes, though it provides for the borrowing of money from the government, it will not be necessary in our case to ask one cent from the government to accept any guarantees AT PRESENT, such as are provided for in the Shipping Bill. We will be able to finance our work without any assistance from any quarter save the assistance promised by the government when the vessels are completed—a bonus up to fifteen per cent. of the cost, or WHAT AMOUNTS TO A GUARANTEE THAT OUR EARNINGS WILL BE FIFTEEN PER CENT. PER ANNUM ON OUR INVESTMENT."

If Mr. Carruthers is right in his statement, where does British Columbia come in? If we have guaranteed Mr. Carruthers fifteen per cent. on his capital investment, no wonder he does not desire to build ships under the government act. If he did so he could not operate them as he pleased. Probably the ships will be operated to the best advantage on either side of the line until the war ends, and then if freights make operation difficult, Mr Carruthers and his friends can promptly call upon the government to pay the 55 per cent. cost of construction and the $5 a ton bonus, and sit back and allow the commission to operate the ships or give them up. According to Mr. Carruthers, his company is guaranteed fifteen per cent. on its investment. Ye Gods! The wonder is that 500 ships are not being built on such terms.

Soldiers and the Land Settlement Problem

THE LAND SETTLEMENT PROBLEM

THE amendments to the "Soldiers' Homestead Act" have changed it very considerably in some most important particulars. The original bill allowed returned soldiers to pre-empt 160 acres. Such pre-emptors [illegible] be to a great extent gregarious human beings, not misanthropes, and the act did not provide for community settlements. The amended measure permits men to apply for less than 160 acres and the area of pre-emption will be fixed by its situation and according to the intention of the pre-emptor. Moreover, in order to stop speculation, the pre-emptor is prevented from transferring or assigning his interest before securing a crown grant to his property, and he cannot secure this for five years after pre-emption. Another amendment provides that both returned soldiers and purchasers of land resold by the crown must spend at least $2.50 an acre on improvements. It will be noticed at once that these amendments make an exceedingly material difference to the value of the bill and Mr. Ross is to be congratulated on having brought them down. But the value of the act will entirely depend on its operation and it is problematical whether under the aegis of a minister of the crown the act can be administered properly.

THE ARBITER OF DESTINY

Under the provisions of The Soldiers' Homestead Act returned soldiers must apply to the Minister of Lands for pre-emptions. In the minister's hands rests the sole responsibility of deciding the fate of the pre-emptor. The act provides that lands, which have not been paid for by speculators in the past, revert to the government. That is to say, supposing A. N. Onymous purchased 5000 acres from the government four or five years ago at $10 an acre and paid $5000 cash for same, and since has paid no more, he now receives 500 acres; and the balance of land unpaid for, namely 4500 acres, returns to the crown. The government was quite a long time making up its mind to this obvious course, which was suggested over eighteen months ago. Undoubtedly the bye-elections had a good deal to do with this sudden decision. The land thus returning to its original owners, the people of British Columbia, is set aside for the returned soldiers. The minister has power to re-sell such lands but the funds accruing for same must be turned over to the Agricultural Credit Commission for loans to soldier pre-emptors. That is excellent but it might be suggested that the lands thus coming under the aegis of the crown should be turned over to the Agricultural Credit Commission, and that this Commission, and not the Minister of Lands, should have the responsibility of administering the Soldiers' Homestead Act.

GETTING RID OF PATRONAGE

The reason for this suggestion is obvious. The Minister of Lands is a political appointment, and as has been proved time and again, the exercise of patronage is a baneful influence on all administration. It matters not in the least whether the government be Liberal or Conservative, the temptation to exercise patronage in the disposal of these lands is too great. The Agricultural Credit Commission is non-political, at least it is specially provided that as far as possible it shall be non-political. It is provided, temporarily at least, that the Hon. William Manson, president of the Council, shall be provisional superintendent. If he becomes Minister of Agriculture, he must resign as provisional superintendent, which will be a very good thing, for his permanent appointment would be a piece of patronage of the worst kind. The Deputy Minister of Finance and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture are both ex-officio directors of the commission.

The Act is really a basis for land settlement, and there can be no proper land settlement without the aid of the Agricultural Credit Commission. It is most important that this should be a non-political body, as the power of loaning money is exceedingly liable to be turned into a means of patr[illegible] a well-known Co[illegible] tareously with a farmer at Alberni, [illegible] well-known Liberal. The commission must decide [illegible] the security [illegible] political [illegible] It refused [illegible] feel aggrieved and [illegible] complexion of his politics. At any rate [illegible] the commission [illegible] Conservative and refused it to a Liberal. [illegible] the commission [illegible]

LOANS TO ASSOCIATIONS

[illegible] Credit [illegible] loans [illegible] may be made for [illegible] Commission will [illegible] in respect of [illegible] out the objects [illegible] or a [illegible] sections [illegible] Credit Commission [illegible] farmers [illegible] is [illegible] Brit[illegible] British [illegible] and make a [illegible] indust[illegible] But [illegible] own banks [illegible] hoped that [illegible] all [illegible]

CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS

There [illegible] was [illegible] by an a[illegible] a certain [illegible] refused [illegible] replied that [illegible] security. [illegible] than any Commission [illegible] responsibility [illegible] number of [illegible] association as an applicant [illegible] Commission and [illegible] association [illegible] individual. It [illegible] countries that land banks directly loaning [illegible] for the whole of their capital, are not nearly so successful

as those land banks which carry on the business of lending part of their own subscribed funds and part of the government funds to their members. By encouraging such associations to become responsible for their members, the Commission will automatically encourage the farmers to form associations in every district and co-operate in the marketing of their produce and the purchasing of their supplies.

NATIONAL SERVICE AND LAND

It will be seen at once why it is so important outside the crude problem of political patronage, for the Soldiers' Homestead Act to be administered by the Agricultural Credit Commission. National Service as a means of production might very well be one of the outcomes of the war. There is no doubt that if in British Columbia land were cleared and settled under a system of National Service or a system of labor colonies under a military [illegible] tration, large tracts could be cleared for agricultural purposes at a very low cost. Supposing, for [illegible] soldiers returned from the war and expressed [illegible] to pre-empt land. At the same time they [illegible] is dated in some far off region, a long [illegible] and with no means of keeping in touch [illegible] would argue with considerable force [illegible] they could clear land and farm it, they [illegible] to market their produce except at a [illegible] vent them competing with the [illegible] situated. They might express [illegible] to take up five acres of land, but [illegible] had no capital for clearing same. [illegible] Credit Commission were faced with this [illegible] handle it on the community basis. [illegible] erintendent and the capital or plant [illegible] conduct a land settlement colony [illegible] tually to be of immense importance to the whole community.

THE ILLUSTRATION ON OUR LANDS

Right in front of [illegible] by prejudice, there is an excellent illustration [illegible] a community. The Doukhobors, for all their unpopularity, are a fine example of an [illegible] which has been most successful [illegible] siderably astonished both Messrs. [illegible] They have their prejudices [illegible] made their land a model of productiveness. Let the Agricultural Commission take the place [illegible] leader, Peter Verenigin. [illegible] acres of land [illegible] The soldiers would [illegible] double quick [illegible] own temporary quarters, and start [illegible] organized [illegible] could be [illegible] the land [illegible] cleared, it [illegible] would not [illegible] had been [illegible] a homestead [illegible] system which wants to be very [illegible] if the Soldiers' Homestead Act [illegible] scheme and [illegible] jections could have been [illegible] ing experiment would have been very widely [illegible]

AN UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

It is no good dismissing such schemes [illegible] The Doukhobors have proved them [illegible] We must get out [illegible] consider what [illegible] to attract population to our province [illegible] to imagine that we can advertise [illegible] Soldiers' Homestead Bill as an attraction for the settler. [illegible] some method which enables the returned [illegible] who may have no money [illegible] with a very good prospect of becoming [illegible] very quickly. He cannot possibly pre-empt [illegible] improve it without money. The Commission cannot lend him sufficient money to clear the land. It is reckoned that it costs the individual on an average at least $200 an acre to clear the land. Under present circumstances, he has to first of all reach the land, which is usually an expensive matter. In some cases the land might be easy to clear. If so, such land could be selected for the community experiment. But the individual has to take up his bed and walk, metaphorically speaking. He has to camp on his 160 acres. He knocks a shack together and sets to work. For months he lives in practical isolation. Some men may prefer this kind of life. If so, there is nothing to prevent them indulging their preference. But the majority of our returned soldiers, and they are the majority of the type of settler we so badly want, as has been said, are gregarious. A great many of them will probably desire for some months after their return explosions of various sorts as their night cap. Seriously speaking, however, is it not quite plain that under the circumstances there is an absolutely unique opportunity for a scheme of this kind in the field of peace on a scale which would almost certainly succeed because of the experience already gained in the field of war?

THE SITUATION OF LANDS

With regard to the situation of the lands our returned soldiers can pre-empt, as has been pointed out, it is no use settling them far from the means of transportation and the possibilities of markets. We can build up communities, and it would be easy to organize several such communities of various sizes, according to the situation and possibilities of production offered by the land. There are hundreds of acres of good farm lands which have virtually been abandoned because farming in the past has not paid. There are millions of acres of land which cannot be used at present, but which in the future may prove valuable. Supposing a farmer has 500 acres of good land in the Fraser Valley, near Sumas. He may be farming [illegible] acres and letting the other 400 acres lie idle, covered with second growth, merely because he has never had the money, or the time, or been able to get the labor to put them under cultivation, dyke them or otherwise deal with them. Supposing the 400 acres to be worth $100 an acre, [illegible] their situation. The owner has then $40,000 worth of land lying absolutely idle. It would be better [illegible] acres of undeveloped land worth $10 an acre in the interior and exchange such land, which might be part of that recovered by the crown under the Soldiers' Homestead Act, for his 400 acres of land which can be [illegible] Four acres of such land for small farming [illegible] and as much as one individual could possibly [illegible] No less than 100 people could be settled on that land and the value of the land would promptly be very [illegible] increased as well as the value of the owner's original holding. If it is possible to work out some [illegible] certain that there are several thousand [illegible] comparatively easy reach of markets [illegible] transportation close at hand. Moreover, a small holding of this land enables a man to work at other jobs when they are offering, and keep his holding as a capital [illegible] which he can always earn sufficient interest [illegible] his family during bad seasons when other [illegible] It provides him with a permanent home [illegible] can always return instead of shifting his family [illegible] place to place wherever he happens to be working.

ON THE THRESHOLD

The farmer at present is faced always with the very difficult problem of labor. He cannot get labor when he most wants it. But under the community system the problem of labor is solved, as it is to the interest of everyone to help each other. Moreover under such conditions, [illegible] bring up families. They can live healthy, [illegible] They are surrounded with people all having the same kind of interest. They are within reach of a city [illegible] for business or pleasure. The effect of such communities on the prosperity of the city is enormous. They stimulate industry by adding a solid and [illegible] power to its basic economic structure. In Denmark, Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, such communities are found on the outskirts of all large towns and form the foundation of their prosperity. Why is it impossible to carry out such projects here? Under the proper administration of the Agricultural Credits Act, which creates a central authority which could be responsible for all such settlements, we have the machinery available if

only the right men are allowed to work it. If the problem of the returned soldier provides us with the opportunity, why not make use of it? It needs boldness, skill and imagination. No man can honestly say that it is impossible to carry out such projects. It is more than probable that if inquiry were made among the farmers, who for years have been on the threshold of their own lands and who have never been able to get a return on the original capital expended on their holdings, it would be found that they would ardently welcome such a proposal. Here again their associations would be of enormous value as collectors of information.

ATTRACTING SETTLERS

It is not only for the returned soldiers we would be providing, but for all immigration. The registration of all people coming into the country and the collection of data concerning them would be an asset of great importance. The skilled artisan might temporarily find work and a home in such communities, and when circumstances enabled him to get steady employment in the city, he could go to it. Employers should register their needs with the government and immigrants would be scheduled under their trades. This, however, is another matter which concerns our labor problem. But our land settlement problem, if rightly regarded, bears a very intimate relation to our labor problem. The bill provided that land for soldiers should be confined to those men who enlisted from British Columbia. This was most unfair to soldiers of the Empire who might desire to emigrate to British Columbia after the war. The bill should have allowed the settlement on equal terms of any soldiers who have served their country so well. Sir Rider Haggard in his recent visit took this matter up with the premier, and the latter promised to amend the bill for this purpose at the next session presuming he would be in the position to do so. In any case, whichever party wins the election, the bill should be amended in accordance with the promise made

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The Liquor Problem Reform or Prohibition

WHEN the premier, the Hon. W. J. Bowser, called the attention of the electors of Vancouver to the many virtues of Mr. Tisdall, his first Minister of Public Works, and the various benefits they had received through the magnanimity of the Provincial Conservative party, he made particular reference to the Municipal Liquor Act, which he said would be known as the Bowser Act. He was evidently very proud of that act and he promised to bring down some amendments at the legislative session, which would improve and make it super-excellent. He did not believe at that time in defeat and thought he could escape coming to any real decision regarding a referendum on the somewhat thorny problem of prohibition. Defeat in Vancouver chastened him and in endeavoring to estimate the causes of that defeat he gave a great deal of credit to prohibition, which is not the first time in the course of his career, the premier has failed to diagnose public sentiment. But having written down prohibition as a Tisdall liability, he promptly decided to make it a Flumerfelt asset. He promised the prohibitionists that he would bring down legislation at the session which would give them all they asked and enable the people at the coming general election to decide by referendum whether they would accept the act he would draw up. To his chagrin the election in Victoria proved that prohibition had nothing whatever to do with his downfall, Mr. Flumerfelt being defeated by a comparatively larger vote than Mr. Tisdall. The premier had, however, proved himself a moral coward. What he had refused to do before, he had assented to the moment he had met with opposition. He was not concerned with the wrongs or rights of prohibition, he was merely anxious to placate a particularly aggressive section of the electorate which knew precisely what it wanted, and was determined to exact its demands without compromise. He was ready to pay the price of cowardice at the expense of his morals.

PLAYING FOR POSITION

So much for the reliance which can be placed on the attitude of the premier towards such policies as may add to the prosperity of British Columbia. He proved himself a political opportunist of the first water. His arrogant assumption of infallibility was obviously founded on nothing but impudence. He believed he could force his party in the legislature to accept a bill embodying everything for which the prohibitionists contended, by lashing it into acquiescence with the knout of fear, which had proved such an excellent instrument when applied to his own shoulders. The Liberals had already answered the demand of the prohibitionists by accepting the principle of a referendum at the general election. Mr. Bowser thought he could do better than the Liberals because not only could he promise legislation but he could actually draft a bill and pass it at the session, thus giving the prohibitionists immediate satisfaction and a battle cry at the election. He hoped that by so doing he would obtain the solid support of the prohibitionists at the election, as they would not care to chance voting Liberal when by so doing they might risk the safety of the child they had nurtured so carefully. He considered it probable that Messrs. Brewster and Macdonald, if they as the Liberal representatives supported his prohibition bill, would lose the vote of the opponents of prohibition, and if they did not support it would be cast off by the prohibitionists. He did not like the plunge into the cold waters of prohibition without even the protection of compensation, but he preferred that to standing naked on the brink shivering in the chilling breeze of adversity. The electorate had stripped him of his pretensions; he thought that he might at least cover his shame with water.

THE POLITICAL FOOTBALL

Thus the whole question of prohibition was flung into the mud of party politics by the trickery of Mr. Bowser. Most of the men connected with the prohibition movement were not to blame. They perfectly honestly desired a straight issue clear of politics and their original request that the referendum should be taken at some other time than a general election was a convincing proof of this desire. But unfortunately they have been completely bamboozled by Mr. Bowser. Some of the leaders of the prohibition movement were always under suspicion. Mr. Bowser was able through promises of political preferment to men like Dr. McGuire to double-cross the sincere prohibitionists. He believed that if he could get the opposition to accept his bill without a murmur, he would be no worse off than before, because if the anti-prohibitionists perceived that both parties were committed to the same bill, they would be more likely to vote on a party basis. What is known as the liquor interest would have no hope whatever from the Liberals and had some experience in the past of the manner in which the so-called superb Bowser act is administered. Moreover, there is a general sentiment that all reformers are Liberals, and that therefore prohibition is a Liberal policy. As a matter of fact it is nothing of the kind. Strictly speaking, it is supposed to interfere with the liberty of the subject, which is a fetish of Liberalism. The pity of it all is that instead of a clear issue, entirely free from party politics, an endeavor is being made to cover the sins of the past with a mantle of morality drawn from the cupboard of prohibition.

PROHIBITION AND THE ALTERNATIVE

Aside from the British Columbia Prohibition Act, which is merely a political make-believe, prohibition offers an extremely interesting study in character. To the man who thinks for himself, it presents no great difficulty. If he believes that the elimination of alcohol as a liquid for human consumption is a good thing for the majority, and he is certain to believe that if he himself does not care to drink any fermented liquor, then he will support prohibition. Even if he himself likes a little stimulating liquid

now and again, he is quite willing to deprive himself of that stimulant if by doing so he can rid his community of the saloon. Generally speaking, his vote for prohibition is a vote against the saloon, not against beer or wine. If the premier had shown the slightest sign of statesmanship he would have anticipated the wave of prohibition and now, instead of floundering in the breakers, would be navigating the clear waters of a new act founded on the experience of other countries, which would have abolished the bar and substituted properly run cafes where people could drink what they pleased under proper conditions. The prohibitionists might not have liked it, but properly advocated and properly drawn up, such an act would have had the support of all those who do not rush to extremes, and who do not believe that legislation will force sobriety on a community. The experience of other countries gives plenty of groundwork on which to base a proper reform of the liquor traffic in British Columbia, which as carried on under present circumstances is hardly above the level of a new and somewhat easy-going mining community. The well tried and most successful Gothenburg system, which in Great Britain is acclimatized under the name of the Public House Trust, of which Earl Grey is chairman, is an excellent and profitable example of what can be accomplished by reform and education, rather than by prohibition, which inappropriately has never proved satisfactory. The Swedish commission which visited the United States to inquire into temperance legislation at once dismissed prohibition as archaic.

LOGIC AND EXTREMES

There are naturally in every movement two extremes. In prohibition there is the extremist who believes that drunkenness can be obliterated by depriving the whole community of any place where intoxicants are sold. He will not listen to the voice of reason, nor will he learn by experience. To him it is sufficient that liquor is a cause of much evil and that the evil will disappear if the cause is removed. To be logical of course, he should apply that same argument to everything. Women are made attractive and, in many cases, extremely fascinating, by their external decorations. Now it will be acknowledged that woman is the real source of all our troubles, because if it were not for her we should not be here to get intoxicated by her presence. We might possibly still be passing a somewhat dull and profitless existence in the Garden of Eden, but under those circumstances we should most probably be very fond of fermented grape juice as were our ancestors who dwelt in the region of the Euphrates. Presumably the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates are not quite so palatable as those to which we are accustomed in British Columbia. However, accepting woman as the logical sequence of Adam being hipped, we have to take the obvious fact that she adorns herself according to her taste. She does not deprive herself of the pleasure of standing at the counter of a dry goods emporium [illegible] other members of her sex the stinginess of men [illegible] deprives her of a second new spring hat. On the contrary she takes the hat and the stinginess as a matter of course. Not all women are entirely good any more than all liquor is entirely bad. But would the most rabid moral reformer attempt to do away with a dry goods emporium because some man of his acquaintance had fallen a victim to the charms of a woman and had spent all his money over the counter of the said emporium in order to deck the fair form of his fancy?

HYPOCRISY AND SINCERITY

Gambling in real estate is an evil. Yet how many people in Vancouver could raise their hands to heaven and say they never gambled in real estate, but only made legitimate investments. Presumably if because their weak brethren had gambled, the government determined to confiscate all real estate, they would desire some compensation for their investments. Or there is the [illegible] of gambling by playing cards. Thousands of people play cards and do not gamble, but there are some who are inveterate gamblers. Supposing the government were to pass a law prohibiting all card playing and confiscating all cards. It is all very well to argue that gambling does not have the same effect as drinking, but a great many lives have been wrecked by gambling in real estate, or stocks, and some of the men who have encouraged that form of gambling are leading reform movements such as prohibition. A great many people who are very excellent citizens strongly object to such persons, who are far greater criminals than any man who keeps a saloon, determining the moral standards of a community. The curious thing is that hypocrites of this kind are able to impose themselves on such reform movements, and their co-operation is apparently welcomed by men whose sole desire is to do good to the community.

PUBLICITY OR SECRECY

The foregoing are legitimate examples of the absurd extremes to which a certain line of reasoning may be carried. The theatre used to be considered the gate to hell by some people, and no doubt given bad conditions and a succession of scandals there might be quite a movement started to shut up all places of amusement. But the certain consequence of such a policy would be to drive all entertainments out of sight. They would become secret indulgences and it is the secrecy of intemperance which has to be feared. That is the real danger of all attempts to legislate communities into forcible temperance. At first the results are excellent, the police courts show a great falling off in cases, there is no drunkenness visible in the streets. Those who have been in the habit of taking a slight stimulant now and again find themselves much better without it. There is a general tendency to give prohibition a fair trial. But after a few months "blind pigs" make their appearance. A little later police records show an increase in the drug evil. All sorts of stimulants begin to be sold under various names. And almost invariably the whole problem becomes a political football which constantly agitates the community, creates insecurity and violent swings of the pendulum from one extreme to the other.

DESTROYING WINDMILLS

The admittedly far-reaching influence of prohibition lies in its appeal to sentiment. From the cold, logical point of view, the propaganda does not carry conviction. Sentiment, which often ignores fact and is intoxicated by the warm glow of "doing good," believes that fermented liquor is evil because it is stimulating. It utterly ignores the fact that millions of human beings partake of fermented liquors of one sort or another without getting intoxicated. It does not take into account the conditions under which fermented liquors are sold, but condemns the liquors. It might just as well condemn women, because of the conditions under which they live in a harem. Just as there are good and bad places for the sale of liquor, so there are good and bad harems. They depend on the general sentiment of the community for the manner in which they are conducted. If in Anatolia a Turk conducts his harem or household in a disreputable manner, he is fined or otherwise punished for being a nuisance to the community. But in British Columbia if a dispenser of liquor conducts his business in a disreputable manner, the liquor is condemned for the fault of the individual. Prohibition is one of those delightfully quixotic undertakings continually destroying windmills. It burns the windmill to the ground and is annoyed [illegible] and the wind still blowing.

DRINKING AND THIEVING

Nobody would ever assert that prohibition for an individual is a bad thing, any more than anyone would assert that a potatoe diet for a whole community is a good thing. It depends so much on the individual and the community. Most people will admit that potatoes without butter might pall at times, or that a strict potatoe diet might proved bad for the digestion. They will also admit that an individual may have tastes not common to a community. Prohibition is based on the belief that it is possible to standardise a nation into uniform sobriety by making it unlawful to drink alcoholic liquor. The prohibitionist argues that as

it is possible to eliminate, or practically eliminate theft, by making it a crime entailing certain legal penalties, therefore, by treating drink in similar fashion, it is possible to eliminate drunkenness. He does not trouble to distinguish between a trade and an instinct. Ever since man came into the world he has instinctively sought for stimulants in some form or another. The more depressed he is, the more stimulation he seeks. Alcohol has certain stimulating properties—temporary, perhaps, but still stimulating. So man discovered wine, beer, and other quite harmless but distinctly intoxicating liquors; so also discovered he whisky, brandy, and other spirits which might be turned to better use than liquidating his digestive apparatus.

THE OTHER EXTREME

At the other extreme is the thick and thin supporter of the saloon who believes every man has a right to get drunk if he pleases ,and that saloons are a necessary part of the social structure. It is admittedly, however, a very minor and entirely negligible, portion of the community that argues on such lines. The so-called "liquor interests" are usually stigmatized by the extreme prohibitionists as being utterly opposed to temperance because their money is invested in the liquor business. Moreover, it is an indisputable fact that liquor and politics have been very closely allied in the past, for the simple reason that all governments have been largely dependent on the liquor traffic for revenue. From the purely business point of view, it is often argued that prohibition, as it must deprive the community of a certain annual and most dependable revenue, is not good business. On the other hand, the prohibitionists claim that the increased efficiency of the community through abstention from liquor makes up for the loss of revenue. The first argument is obviously true, but it is weak, because it is easy to point out that the community as a whole is quite willing to sacrifice some of its revenue towards the general advancement of humanity, assuming of course that drink is a terrible evil which can only be eliminated by that sacrifice. The second argument is founded chiefly on the support given the prohibition movement by some of the "captains of industry," who find their employees capable of more and better work if they do not get drunk. It is only necessary to add that these "captains of industry" are hardly ever total abstainers themselves. A great many most inaccurate and misleading examples are given of the improvement in the efficiency of workers under prohibition, when as a matter of fact such a thing as complete prohibition does not exist.

REGULATED OR UNREGULATED?

This may seem a somewhat startling statement but, nevertheless, it is true. Prohibition exists, but is not enforced in some states of the Union, but prohibition does not exist in Canada, and that is the reason why, in the Federal Parliament Mr. H. H. Stevens moved a resolution requesting legislation for national prohibition. His resolution was based on the same foundation as the Hobson Act in the United States, which President Wilson, ex-President Taft, Senator Root and many others oppose on the ground that prohibition is really a state matter or better still, a question for municipalities to decide under what is known as local option. The extreme prohibitionists support a nation-wide system of prohibition, but there is not much chance of it coming into being for the reason that under the state system generally in being, the people are allowed to import liquor from other states. Therefore, prohibition is not prohibition in its strict sense. There are thousands of men who will vote for prohibition in their state if it will abolish the bar, but those same men will vote against national prohibition, because under such a system they could not import liquor from other parts of the country. Under the Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan laws, the people of those provinces can import liquor in cases from British Columbia. The same policy is followed in the British Columbia Act. Any one who can pay the price can mail an order to Calgary for a case of whiskey or beer and get as drunk as he pleases on it. A. can send to Calgary for a dozen bottles of whisky and sell half a dozen at cost, or possibly at a profit, to B next door, if he stands in with the politicians. The whole trade, instead of being regulated is unregulated. That is the experience of every state in the Union. But it is perfectly obvious that any legislation which allows the individual the liberty of importation and endeavors to prevent that individual "giving" a bottle or two to a friend, will be interference of the most drastic kind with the liberty of the individual. Spies will exist everywhere. There will spring up the professional informer who would be paid by those interested for such convictions as he could secure. Blackmail of the very worst kind will flourish.

THE GENERAL SENTIMENT

Some months ago, according to general sentiment, or what may be termed the froth of public opinion, prohibition was expected to carry at the general election. Manitoba having voted in favor of the Macdonald Act by a two-to-one majority, the prohibitionists deemed victory assured. The manner in which the city of Winnipeg voted against the saloon seemed conclusive evidence that both the urban and rural communities were agreed on abolishing the bar. In that sentiment, as the writer has already said, a vast majority of the people of British Columbia heartily acquiesce. But the legislation proposed is open to considerable criticism, and that legislation has entirely changed public opinion. In that respect, therefore, the writer considers the prohibitionists blundered when they allowed Premier Bowser to put forward legislation at the last session. It is absolutely impossible for any government to press forward hasty legislation on such an important subject, which at the same time can be considered good legislation. Most members of the legislature were afraid of criticising the legislation. Yet the people of British Columbia do not desire to be stampeded into an ill-considered policy. They would doubtless have voted for abolishing the bar on the general issue, but surely they will hesitate before voting for such a contemptible piece of legislation as the present bill. It would be a thousand pities if those Liberals and Conservatives, who really do think for themselves, and who are not slaves to their party, played politics on this issue merely because they believe the prohibitionists hold the balance of power and will throw their vote solidly regardless of all else, to only those politicians who endorse their legislation. Let these politicians remember that the electorate as a whole will vote solidly for the man who shows himself independent and able to criticize. He may be an ardent advocate of temperance and yet not believe in prohibition as proposed.

FRANKNESS WANTED

That some people will vote for or against prohibition with at any regard for the form of the legislation is certain. But the Liberals will lose ground if they endorse any legislation which is not just, and they may rest assured that the great majority of the people in British Columbia will respect them far more if they speak out boldly and are not afraid. There are a great many active prohibitionists who are not agreed on the question. They have been obliged to play politics. But outside the official prohibition party there is a very large and well-formed sentiment for liquor reform. The great mistake made by the liquor interests was in not bringing forward some proposals for complete reform long ago. It must be admitted, however, that they would be terribly handicapped in so doing, as their sincerity would be very much doubted, and the ardent advocates of prohibition would at once look for a nigger on the fence. That is the weakness of the ardent advocate. He presumes no one is sincere but himself. There has been no real lead given to those who desire reformation and not prohibition, and undoubtedly a great many people felt that prohibition was better than no reform at all. They wanted to abolish the bar and believed that prohibition meant that. The same attitude whatever it means. The writer believes British Columbia had and still has, a magnificent opportunity to lead the way to permanent and stable liquor reform by the adoption of the or an experience of Sweden and other countries, which have rejected prohibition and adopted sane and intelligent legislation suitable to their conditions.

SWEEPING AND GARNISHING

It is these conditions to which attention should be directed. The saloons as "run" today are an absolute degrada-

the breweries and distilleries, as well as the wholesale and retail liquor dealers. No government with any pretensions to business could contemplate paying some millions in compensation at this time, and no legislation which provided proper compensation would have passed if it had been properly debated, because the people are not in favor of prohibition IF IT COSTS THEM ANYTHING. They have lost sight of the general loss of revenue or be willing to pay extra taxation to make up for that annual revenue which amounts for Vancouver alone to $91,410.00, and for the Provincial Treasury to $192,017.96, but if they are faced with the necessity of borrowing some millions of dollars to compensate the hotel investor—said hotels having been called into existence far above any real demand for them simply under the clauses of the Bowser Act—prohibition stands in danger of being defeated by referendum at the general election.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LIQUOR TRADE

Mr. Bowser in an esparing effort to catch the anti-prohibitionists promised a judicial commission after the people had voted on the act, which if prohibition passed, would decide on the question of compensation. That at any rate should make compensation certain, and Mr. Jonathan Rogers, the president of The People's Prohibition party, is reported as preferring to see prohibition delayed for ten years rather than pay compensation. The prohibitionist really argues that by giving the liquor trade plenty of notice, that is allowing so many months to pass before prohibition becomes effective after it is passed, the investor in the liquor business has ample time to withdraw his investment. He might just as well say that by insisting on all women wearing the style of dress made out of one material for the sake of economy, and giving a "dry goods" emporium plenty of notice, he is compensating the manufacturers of dress goods as well as those shopkeepers who have large stocks on hand. If a person quite legitimately invested his money in hotel property, which hotel was built under the protection of the Bowser Act, because only hotels could have a bar, the value of his investment is practically destroyed if the hotel is not allowed to sell liquor, which undoubtedly forms a large part of the revenue of the hotel. At present it will be difficult to estimate the loss in value [illegible] liquor privileges away from the hotels under [illegible] circumstances. It may be easy in the case of a wholesale and retail liquor dealer to estimate his loss based on the average profits of the last three or four years, but if a compensation is paid there must be a dead loss of a very considerable sum invested under the protection of the government. For that is what it comes to. If the government refuses compensation under pressure of the prohibitionists, it is betray a trust. The government has been sharing the profits of the liquor interests for years. The people have received the benefit of the revenue derived from licenses. The most pious form of morality, such as guides the prohibitionists, cannot afford to steal. Yet that is exactly what no compensation amounts to. The money was invested for a consideration. To argue that no compensation was given to the slave owners when slavery was abolished is not only drawing a wrong parallel, but betraying an ignorance of history. The individual may put forward many and excellent reasons for not giving compensation, but it is not the individual that pays but the government, and the government usually is bound to pay compensation. The prohibitionist may have much truth on his side when he argues against compensation, but the government has none whatever. That is a point which needs emphasising. The government represents the individual. Thus a judicial commission may decide in favor of compensation, and we cannot possibly pay such compensation.

WAR AND PROHIBITION

There has been a great deal of capital made out of the present war and the efforts made in Russia, France and Great Britain to stop excessive drinking. It is an excellent illustration of a sentimental and emotional appeal based on a complete misunderstanding of the liquor problem in the countries mentioned. No mention is made of Germany, generally looked on as the most efficient of all the belligerents, because Germany has not attempted to stop the people drinking beer. For economic reasons she has curtailed the output of breweries and distilleries, as

she must feed her pigs, the forage of which under ordinary circumstances is largely imported from Russia.

Russia has prohibited the manufacture and sale of vodka. There was no question of compensation, as it was a government monopoly, but large quanaities of wine and beer are being consumed and alas! there is Kumusha, and Kranzae—the latter being made from wood alcohol, pepper and other spices—which have both become very popular, and which are manufactured illicitly everywhere.

France, before the war, was debating the prohibition of absinthe and the legislation passed after the war began had been determined on beforehand. She paid compensation to the manufacturers of absinthe. The soldiers of France are supplied with a special wine, probably an excellent cheap claret, which is the national beverage. No one would think of attempting to legislate for prohibition in France.

Great Britain has for years been debating the question of temperance. Mr. Lloyd George's campaign is fresh in the memory of all. It did not result in any [illegible] legislation except against "treating," which rather appealed to the sense of humor of most people, but it did make people more temperate and call attention to the great progress made under Earl Grey's scheme to which reference has already been made. The soldiers at the front are all allowed rum in the trenches, and are trusted when not in the firing line not to get drunk. Character rather than legislation is relied on.

THE INDEPENDENT VIEW

The foregoing deals quite frankly with prohibition in British Columbia, as it appeals to the independent man. It is not an attempt to make out a case against prohibition, but it gives facts which cannot be refuted. The writer is perfectly well aware of the terrific correspondence which has permeated the columns of the newspapers, both for and against prohibition. It is a subject which lends itself to all kinds of argument and analysis. Most of the prohibition side of the correspondence has been over the signature of a certain gentleman whose activities as manager of the defunct British Columbia Securities Company, the notorious subsidiary real estate company of the Dominion Trust, would in any other place disqualify him as a leading reformer. There is no need to be personal but the association of one of two of the most prominent prohibitionists with the movement does it a great deal of harm, as nobody is convinced of their sincerity, but looks for the business, political or financial interest. There are other well known men connected with the movement whose sincerity and honesty of purpose is above all question. Moreover throughout both Canada and the United States there is passing one of the great periodical waves of temperance reform which usually takes the form of prohibition. That so many states or provinces have gone, what is called "dry" is well known, but it is a poor argument, because not only does the law vary in a great many states, but the per capita consumption of liquor in the United States shows a steady increase in the last fourteen years despite prohibition. This article has carefully refrained from going into details, because they tend to confuse issues, and the sole purpose of discussing the problem has been to deal with it from the ordinary common sense point of view. No prohibitionist who is fair-minded can surely object to anything herein. He must allow that there is a point of view which may not agree with too hasty a conclusion on the subject. It is not a personal point of view, but one generally held by what has been termed the silent vote.

Gambling with Prohibition in a Political Bucketshop

PERIODICALLY violent waves of sentiment sweep through communities and nations, carrying on their foaming crests the personal fortunes of several politicians and publicists, and the debris of political parties, while on their heaving flanks a vast mass of public opinion rises and falls proportionately with the emotional appeal made by the noise and breaking power of the crest. The executive of the People's Prohibition party finding their position weakened by the iniquitous legislation passed at their behest during the closing days of the last session of the local legislature, determined to import that notorious vulgarian, Billy Sunday, to "emotionalize" Vancouver and Victoria into voting for the British Columbia Prohibition Act without giving it proper consideration. It was probably believed that as a send-off to a strenuous campaign, Billy Sunday's reputation was a great card to play. Hon. Dentist McGuire, Messrs. Jonathan Rogers, Hammond and Gibson have proved themselves to be the "hoodoos" of the movement, and it was thought advisable to stimulate the public with Sundayisms to offset the harm done the whole prohibition movement by political mugwumps. Public interest in the prohibition movement would be revived if Billy Sunday attended. He would certainly galvanize it into action and very likely exercise sufficient influence on its sentimental side to pass the bill. That it is a bad bill, and does not prohibit, makes no difference. The public is more easily swayed by sentiment than reason. Vaudeville is more popular than Shakespeare, and Billy Sunday attracts more people than a bible class.

AN INTEMPERATE PERFORMER

The prohibitionist is not really a temperance reformer. He is an intemperate performer on the instrument of public sentiment. He strikes a series of crashing discords and believes that if only he makes enough noise the public will believe it is listening to music. To a great extent he is justified in his belief. The success of Billy Sunday is a case in point. He is a manufacturer of biblical slang on the wholesale. He is as intimate with the Deity as the Emperor William. His blasphemies pass as loaves and fishes to the hungry. They are excused on the ground that the people are stimulated by them. Presumably the same people are not stimulated by the Sermon on the Mount. Apparently those who believe in the so called evangelism of Billy Sunday do not believe in the efficacy of their churches. They consider it necessary to indulge in the intoxicating process of a stirring emotionalism, in order to stimulate their congregations. "Billy Sunday stirs them up—he draws them" is the common excuse for this type of intoxication. Psychologically he has exactly the same effect as a cask of whisky in a lumber camp. He excites his hearers by his exhortations. We boast of our civilisation—why, the nakedest savages in Darkest Africa have their Billy Sundays, and call them witch doctors. To hear Mr. William Sunday calling on a community to abandon liquor because it is intoxicating, is really just as ludicrous as to hear Mr. William Bowser calling on the electorate of British Columbia to abandon politics because of patronage.

A POLITICAL BUCKET SHOP

The leaders of prohibition in British Columbia are making a determined effort in the last two or three weeks of the electoral campaign to bring public opinion once more into line with the prohibition bill. Hardly anyone examines a bill—they look at the total and if possible, pay up. They accept the summary as a fact

They forget accountants make mistakes sometimes, especially if it is convenient to gloss over certain items. That is exactly what the political prohibitionists will do. They will try and convince the public at the last moment that if they vote for the prohibition bill they will be voting for prohibition. As a matter of fact, they know perfectly well the electorate will be voting for nothing of the sort. The bill is an absolute fiasco. A cursory examination of it, however, will not help the ordinary individual. It is wrapped in legal verbiage and mystic penalties. To the layman it may look like prohibition, and anyone on a platform could take certain clauses as illustrative of the whole bill and prove to an audience what an excellent bill it is. The Hon. Dentist McGuire, Minister of Education, for instance, would no doubt assert that the bill as drafted is the bill as demanded by the prohibition party. It is nothing of the sort. The sincere prohibitionists have been induced to gamble in temperance by the operators of a political bucket shop.

THE PROHIBITION SUBSTITUTE

The rights and wrongs of prohibition have nothing to do with this bill. As has been pointed out, by the terms of the Doherty bill, passed by the Federal government, each province was able to really prohibit liquor by forbidding its transportation. That bill was passed before Premier Bowser brought down the Prohibition Bill. The executive of the prohibition party could have insisted on the Doherty Bill being part of the British Columbia Bill. They did nothing of the sort. They insisted on drafting a bill which allows anyone who can afford it to buy as much liquor as they choose from outside the province and consume it in their private dwelling house, while the poor man who cannot afford to buy it in case lots or who lives in a boarding house, is deprived of the privilege of buying a drink in a hotel or a bottle in a store. The Superintendent of Provincial Police, a political appointment, is given all the privileges and power of the Prefect of Police in Russia. The right of search is limitless. The informer is rewarded and his name kept secret. The reason for this is plain. The prohibition executive knew it had no chance of obtaining the vote of the majority of the ordinary citizens on a strictly prohibitory bill. They dare not ask for legislation against the people who can afford to import liquor, but they believed they could obtain the support of this portion of the electorate for the purpose of abolishing the bars. So they substituted private for public houses, unregulated for regulated drinking, privileged vendors for the hotel proprietors, and a spy system for the license board, and called it prohibition.

THE NIGGER IN THE WOODPILE

Probably the political executors of the so-called People's Prohibition Party argue that if the bill does not prohibit, if it is such a bad bill as its opponents aver, why not support it? Why not get the people to vote for it and thus still forever the plaint of the prohibitionist? The answer is simple. If the electorate pass this bill they once more give the lieutenant-governor-in-council power "to make such other regulations **as may be deemed necessary for the proper administration** and carrying into effect the provisions of this act." Not only this, but "If the occupant of any private dwelling house or of any part thereof is convicted of any offence against any of the provisions of this act committed in or in respect of such house, the same shall cease to be a private dwelling house within the meaning of this act, during the time the person so convicted occupies the said house or any part thereof." The Superintendent and all constables and officers of every provincial and of every municipal police force have full authority to enforce all the provisions of the act, and "when any information is given to any such police constable or officer that there is cause to suspect that some person is violating any of the provisions of this act, it shall be his duty to make diligent inquiry into the truth of such information and to enter complaint, in his own name, for the prosecution of such violation, without communicating the name of the person giving such information." Further, "In describing offences respecting the sale or keeping for sale or other disposal of liquor, or the having, keeping, giving, purchasing, or the consumption of liquor in any information . . . it shall be sufficient to state the sale or keeping for sale or disposal, or the having, keeping, GIVING, purchasing or CONSUMPTION of liquor, simply without stating the name or kind of such liquor or the price thereof, or any person to whom it was sold or by whom it was taken or consumed . . . ."

THE SPANISH INQUISITION

Now, reading those three clauses together, can any one conceive of a legislature in its senses passing such an act? Only three Conservative members and the opposition protested against the act being passed. Does any sincere prohibitionist or temperance reformer in his senses desire to establish by law a state of affairs in British Columbia which would rival the Spanish inquisition? After the investigation into school board affairs, the public know something of how patronage is exercised to the detriment of business. Imagine what would happen if this prohibition act passed. Anyone who criticised the government and who happened to have imported liquor for his personal consumption—and there are special provisions in the act for the tracing of all such importations—in his private dwelling house, could be informed against by some heeler of a political party. If he had a card party and gave a single one of his guests a drink, by the terms of the act he can be convicted of an offense, and his house, under the law, ceases to be a private dwelling. There is no need for a witness to "depose as to the precise consideration received" for the drink, "to his own personal or certain knowledge," but the "Justice trying the case, so soon as it appears to him that the circumstances in evidence sufficiently establish the infraction of the law complained of, shall put the defendant on his defence, and, in default of his rebuttal of such evidence, convict him accordingly." There is no need "to show that money actually passed or any liquor was actually consumed . . . ." The Justice is at liberty to infer "that the liquor in question is intoxicating, from the fact that the witness describes it as intoxicating, or by a name which is commonly applied to an intoxicating liquor."

THE SPIES OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Not for one moment is it necessary to cast any slur on any judge of this province. But every justice, every police officer and every person connected with the administration of this act, owes his position to the government. The whole powers of this act lie in the Attorney-General's department. It is not a question of judges in any of our courts, but of police magistrates scattered up and down the province who, with the best of intentions, may not be very capable of administering such an act. Moreover, most careful provisions are made for the reporting of every case by the Superintendent from time to time to the Attorney-

MISS B. C.—But. Dr., that's a very ugly tooth.

DR. Mc.—For a false tooth it's the best I can do.

MISS B. C.—Well, thank you. I won't have that thing forced into my mouth anyway.

General. The act makes the Superintendent report "any other information asked for by the Attorney-General." There is no appeal from summary conviction except by a long and tiresome process. The more the act is analysed the more astounding it seems that the legislature passed it. For no one pretends now that it is a prohibition act. No one who reads it carefully can ever imagine it prohibits the sale of liquor. But what it does do is to throw into the hands of the Attorney-General powers which can be exercised entirely outside this act. It gives him a perfect system of espionage right through the province, gathers round him a whole host of "vendors" and other official administrators of the act, a crowd of professional informers, and leaves a political opponent entirely at his mercy.

A POLITICAL INQUISITIONAL ACT

This is not a joke or an exaggeration. Read again the clauses which have been quoted and only one conclusion is possible. The Prohibition Act is not a prohibition act but a Political Inquisitional Act. If that act is passed as it stands—and the people of British Columbia are being asked to vote "yes" or "no" at the elections—it sets up in this province a tribunal which can at any time blast the career of any person without the semblance of a trial. If that act is passed and the present government is returned to power with Mr. Bowser as premier—heaven help this country. If any constitutional lawyer had carefully designed an act for extending the political powers of the attorney-general and the evils of patronage, he could not have drawn up a better act. It is no use arguing that it is absurd to imagine Mr. Bowser or any other attorney-general would use the powers as described. That is not the point. The point is that this act was drawn by Mr. Bowser as attorney-general, and that as drawn it does confer such powers, as any child can see from the clauses quoted. They are not clauses hand picked, they are strengthened and buttressed in every possible way, and the people of British Columbia are asked to pass such an act under the guise of a prohibition act. If that act is passed and a Liberal government is returned to power, its very first action should be to repeal that act. [illegible] should be asked whether he favors that act. The direct question should be put and no quibbling allowed. The people are asked to vote yes or no—let their political representatives answer yes or no!

AN APPEAL TO ALL CITIZENS

There is no need here to apeal to all those sincere temperance reformers who may have taken part in the prohibition movement. It is absolutely impossible that they can sincerely desire such a bill to pass as it stands. It is a bill specially designed to throw dust in their eyes. It is a bill which by its name appeals to a sentiment, but which, by its drafting, appeals to every political evil in this province. The clauses relating to the right of search, of information, of the administration of the act, are an absolute travesty of our vaunted justice and liberty. Let the Hon. Dentist McGuire answer the straight question as to whether he will vote for that bill. Let the premier himself be asked whether he will vote for his own bill. That is the only way to force this thing to a proper issue. Those people who believe in prohibition will probably never take the trouble to read the bill. Those people who are interested in the liquor trade, who endeavor to present the bill passing, are handicapped by their associations. Their attempts to lay the matter before the people are suspect. But let any fair-minded or even prejudiced person read the clauses quoted carefully, and surely the issue is plain. How many would be candidates have read that bill? Is it possible that any Liberal will fear to pin his opponent down to the clauses which have been quoted. His opponent passed that bill, voted for it and must stand by it. He cannot avoid it. How can any intelligent citizen vote for anyone who says that he favors that bill as it stands?

A PLAIN ISSUE FOR PLAIN PEOPLE

Here at least is a plain issue for plain people. Here at last is something over which there can be no quibbling. Both parties, Liberal and Conservatives, both leaders, Messrs. Bowser and Brewster, can make their position quite clear. The Liberals, it is true, are not responsible for the drafting or the passing of that iniquitous bill. It is extremely doubtful if they analysed it, any more than the Conservatives could have analysed it. Mr. H. B. Thomson, Conservative, specially stated that "it was not a government measure in the real sense of that phrase." Mr. Brewster stated for the opposition that "there are many features of this legislation not in the best interests of our people." But as yet it is doubtful if the clauses quoted have ever been really considered together. The candidates need not state whether they are or are not in favor of prohibition. But they surely must state whether they are or are not in favor of the "British Columbia Prohibition Act." As yet it appears the issue has been most [illegible]. Let there be [illegible] avoidance in future. [illegible] throughout this province let [illegible] read and then let the candidate be [illegible] for the Act. The prohibitionists want a straight issue—well, they have it. There could be no straighter one. Let us see first of all what our fighting premier "with a punch in each hand," answers to the direct question. He introduced the bill, he drafted it, now let him say whether he is in favor of it. He cannot avoid the issue by stating it is a non-party measure. He threw the question of prohibition into the party arena—no one else—now let him bear the responsibility. He [illegible] to the prohibitionists as [illegible] by his choice. Is this [illegible] of his political acumen, of [illegible] in attempting to win the pro[illegible] all betrayed the hotel interests [illegible] he betrayed the prohibitionists by [illegible] executive with a cabinet position; finally he [illegible] the people by drawing up an act [illegible] the liquor traffic, but which does [illegible] own powers and the patronage at [illegible] any one trust him further? If this act [illegible] sincerity, or cowardice, political trickery [illegible], what will be the result of an administra[illegible] parentage?

READ THESE CLAUSES.

The following clauses of The British Columbia Prohibition Act are those to which especial attention is drawn:—

The Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council has the power "to make such other regulations AS MAY BE DEEMED NECESSARY for the proper administration and carrying into effect the provisions of this act."

Moreover "if the occupant of any private dwelling house or of any part thereof is convicted of any offence against any of the provisions of this act committed in or in respect of such house, the same SHALL CEASE TO BE A PRIVATE DWELLING HOUSE within the meaning of the act, during the time the person so convicted occupies the said house or any part thereof."

The Superintendent and all constables and officers of every provincial and of every municipal police force have full authority to enforce all the provisions of this act and "when any information is given to any such police constable or officer that there is cause to SUSPECT that some person is violating any of the provisions of this act, it shall be his duty to make DILIGENT INQUIRY" (. . . which includes the right of search and breaking open of cupboards doors, etc. . . .) "into the truth of such information and to enter complaint in his own name for the prosecution of such violation, WITHOUT COMMUNICATING THE NAME OF THE PERSON GIVING SUCH INFORMATION."

"In describing offences respecting the sale or keeping for sale or other disposal of liquor, or the HAVING, KEEPING, GIVING, PURCHASING OR THE CONSUMPTION of liquor in any information . . . it shall be sufficient to state the sale or keeping for sale or disposal, or the HAVING, KEEPING, GIVING, PURCHASING OR CONSUMPTION of liquor simply, without stating the name or kind of such liquor or the price thereof OR ANY PERSON to whom it was sold or BY WHOM IT WAS TAKEN OR CONSUMED. . . ."

There is no need for a witness "to depose as to the precise consideration received" for the drink "TO HIS OWN CERTAIN OR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE," but the "Justice trying the case so soon as it appears to him that the circumstances in evidence sufficiently establish the infraction of the law complained of, shall put the defendant on his defence, and in default of his rebuttal of such evidence, CONVICT HIM ACCORDINGLY."

There is no need to "SHOW THAT MONEY ACTUALLY PASSED OR ANY LIQUOR WAS ACTUALLY CONSUMED."

The Justice is at liberty to infer "THAT THE LIQUOR IN QUESTION IS INTOXICATING FROM THE FACT THAT THE WITNESS DESCRIBES IT AS INTOXICATING OR BY A NAME WHICH IS COMMONLY APPLIED TO AN INTOXICATING LIQUOR."

The Superintendent must report to the Attorney-General everything in connection with this Act, and "ANY OTHER INFORMATION ASKED FOR BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL."

The Great Plugging Conspiracy

A DIFFICULT POSITION

IN considering any of the legislation which has been brought before the provincial legislature during the recent session, certain facts must be kept in mind. There is a great deal of difference between such policies as may be good for the country and those which are good for the party. The premier may be forgiven much, for the simple reason that much was expected of him. For some years he lived in an atmosphere of adulation. Everybody who wanted anything from the government eventually saw the attorney-general, who was always "on the job." He worked extremely hard for years and accepted responsibility which some of his colleagues were only too ready to shift on to his shoulders. He fairly won his position as premier by hard work. Brilliant he is not, but he is quick to see an advantage if it is brought within his grasp. His great weakness is his love of flattery and his dislike of those who deal frankly with him and tell him he is not infallible. He does not pretend to be a statesman, but he does believe in himself as a politician. He is adroit and unscrupulous, but he is honest according to his standard of political honesty. He sees nothing wrong in using his position for his personal profit and advantage, because that is politics as he sees them. The consequence is that his policies are dictated entirely by their value for electoral purposes. His principles have nothing to do with his policies, for principles, in his opinion, should be sacrificed to the good of his party. It is absurd to blame him for his tactics. Drowning men will clutch at any straws, and if garbage contains a considerable amount of straw that is not his fault. The by-elections were a great shock to him. He had only one course open. He had to bring down as much legislation as was possible, which might prove popular from the point of vieww of spending money, and find mud which could stick to his opponents. The plugging conspiracy supplied plenty of mud.

THE PLUGGING CONSPIRACY

To those versed in the art or business of politics the evidence given at Victoria in the inquiry into the Vancouver by-election may be exciting, interesting, or even valuable. To the great majority of the citizens, however, who are not interested in politics but display considerable interest in policies, the whole spectacle is disgusting and sordid to a degree. For weeks the government was busy calling witnesses culled from the prolific underworld of Seattle to prove that the Liberals deliberately imported several undesirables in order that they might "plug," that is to say, impersonate some voter at the polls, so as to help defeat the government candidate, Mr. C. E. Tisdall. The government's main effort has naturally been directed to implicate the winner of the election, Mr. M. A. Macdonald, in the fraud. It has been sought to prove that Mr. Macdonald not only knew and countenanced the importation of these men but that he paid for them and directly conspired with his campaign committee to commit this fraud on the people of the province. It must be admitted by any fair-minded person that if Mr. Macdonald was in any way responsible for the fraud he is no proper person to represent the city of Vancouver even in the local legislature at Victoria. But it must also be admitted that if he knew nothing of what was going on, he has been the object of a very vile conspiracy. It is possible that some of his friends knew of and did attempt to commit the fraud, but the evidence given seems to prove that Mr. Macdonald is more the victim of either his friends, or a conspiracy than the beneficent of a fraud.

THE LIBERAL INVESTIGATION

It is fair to admit that the government was obliged to try and fix the blame on Mr. Macdonald if it could be proved that he had so conspired. But seeing that the premier is also attorney-general of the province, it would have been thought that if there was a fraud, it was the business of the attorney-general, when it was brought to his notice, to institute proceedings against the parties concerned, have them arrested on a warrant charging them with committing this fraud, and have them tried by the judiciary. Instead, what happened was that the Liberals themselves, headed by Mr. Patrick Donnelly, swore an information against a certain man named Annance and prosecuted him before a judge for impersonation. They proved their case and Annance was sent to jail. The NEWS-ADVERTISER seems to think that the Liberals would not have done this unless they were certain they had been found out. It suggests that they proceeded to investigate the smaller fraud in the hopes of confusing the trail leading to the bigger conspiracy. This seemed to rest on a list presented to the City Liberal Organization by one John T. Scott, apparently the head clerk of the Liberal Provincial Organization. The list carried a number of names which were asked to be passed as bona-fide voters

when they came before the scrutineers at the polling booths. This list was promptly suppressed by the City Liberal Organization and every effort made to find out why it was issued.

THE SCOTT LIST

It was this list which brought forward one J. C. Gosden, who has been prosecuted for perjury by Mr. Macdonald. It also disclosed the activities of John T. Scott, who is held responsible for it. Scott appears to have handled funds for the Liberals and Gosden maintained that large sums went through Scott's hands. Other evidence indicated that Gosden must have greatly exaggerated, as the Liberals do not seem according to Mr. Pound, then treasurer, to have had any large sums to dispose of. He offered to show his books, but the committee of investigation apparently were not very interested in books. Seemingly the committee knew perfectly well that the real conspiracy concerned the imported "gentlemen" from Seattle. The inquiry really settled on that feature, especially after the Annance case was settled by the Liberals themselves. The list issued by Scott seems to hang on the evidence of Gosden, who found himself prosecuted for perjury because he swore he met Mr. Macdonald at a certain time outside the post office at Victoria, which Mr. Macdonald denied. The evidence concerning this meeting at which it is alleged Mr. Macdonald paid Gosden $50 was rather interesting, as it was corroborated by a Mr. Planta, a well-known Conservative from Nanaimo. A great deal of capital has been made out of this meeting, so it may be as well to briefly deal with it.

THE POST OFFICE MEETING

According to Gosden, he was told by Scott to collect certain monies from Mr. Macdonald who was responsible for paying him. Gosden seems to have bothered Scott several times about this money, and Scott seems to have continually put him off. Gosden, according to his story, complained to Mr. Macdonald and the latter eventually made the appointment outside the Victoria post office, and there handed him over $50. Gosden admits Mr. Macdonald believed he was paying wages. This evidence was corroborated by some man off a steamboat who said he was standing in the shadow of one of the corners of the post office, and also by Mr. Planta and his son of Nanaimo who very curiously happened to be watching Mr. Macdonald at the same time. The unbiased man reading the evidence would come to the conclusion that a trap had been carefully set by those were desirous of catching Mr. Macdonald. It was to say the least of it, most curious that the government was able to produce witnesses to a meeting which both Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald say could not have occurred. If it did occur, surely Mr. Macdonald would be very foolish to try and prove an alibi. If he could not prove it he would be condemned in any case, whatever he had thought about the payment he is alleged to have made to Gosden. After all, he is a lawyer, and would realize that if he did pay any money to Gosden for wages, frankness would have been all that was necessary. Whether Gosden was paid by any one remains to be seen. Gosden could doubtless have organized a certain number of votes for either party if he had been paid to do so. The result of the case was that the jury disagreed. It was said eleven of them were in favor of convicting Gosden of perjury. One stood out against all argument.

A CURIOUS COINCIDENCE

Thus as far as the episode is concerned, at best Gosden could only prove that Mr. Macdonald paid him $50 for work done, said work being the organization of waterfront workers for the Liberals. But the importation of "pluggers" from Seattle was obviously the conspiracy which the government knew all about. Side issues might be uncertain, but the Seattle stage was all set and the parts known by heart. The government had plenty of witnesses ready to prove to the people of British Columbia what a fraudulent humbug the new member was. Most people at the outset were struck by a curious coincidence. The premier and attorney-general was responsible for the investigation by the parliamentary committee, and immediately after the committee was named, the government witnesses were on hand to give evidence. The very first was a jail bird from Seattle whose real name was not given. The rest of the evidence was from similar sources. It was obvious then that the government, or at least the premier, knew all about the case and a great deal of time might have been saved if Mr. Bowser had been asked to give the committee all his information regarding the horrible plot. That the premier had all information was plain, and later on it developed that some of the members of the Conservative patronage committee in Vancouver, Messrs. Welch and Hoskin, knew all about it. Their knowledge had apparently come through one John L. Sullivan, of the Irving Hotel, said to be a somewhat favored hostelry in the eyes of the licensing commissioners, whose political influence is naturally not small.

THE GOVERNMENT'S KNOWLEDGE

Before the evidence had gone very far it was found that all trails were leading to this particular friend of the patronage committee. Eventually he was called as a witness and then it transpired that for days before the election he knew through his friends in Seattle all about the "plugging" conspiracy, and that he warned the Conservatives. Why did he warn Mr. Welsh, the grocer and prospective candidate for Vancouver? Why did he not go straight to the police if he was acting in the interests of the public? The answer seems to be contained in the evidence given by the police. They did not care about information which came to them through such sources. They evidently knew Mr. Sullivan and his friends. Had not the mayor of Vancouver recently fallen foul of the division of authority between the police and license commissioners? He suggested that the police could not do their duty because of the interference of the license commissioners. Are the latter part and parcel of the Conservative political machinery and could they, therefore, protect certain friends such as John L. Sullivan? The evidence of Mr. Sullivan revealed two things. First, that he was a very good friend of the Conservatives; and secondly, that the government knew all about the plugging before a single plugger came to Vancouver. Ex-alderman Hoskin, of the patronage committee, was actually at the station to see some of them come in. The NEWS-ADVERTISER, which, by the way, became highly hysterical at the turn affairs were taking, tried to make out the police did not do their duty. It was obviously clutching at straws.

ENTER ONE SULLIVAN

Behold then the trail which leads to John L. Sullivan, a certain gentleman presumably of Irish extraction, a well-known figure in the political underworld of Seattle, proprietor of the Irving Hotel on Hastings Street, Vancouver, friend of the license inspectors and the patronage committee of the Conservative party, whose bar on Sundays has been said to dispense liquor against the law, and whose activities in connection with the plugging business were, to put it mildly, most suspicious. According to Messrs. Welsh and Hoskin, both Conservatives, and on the patronage committee, Sullivan warned the Conservatives of what was taking place. All the correspondence, unsigned and signed, which appears to have taken place between the Conservative officials and Sullivan has, curiously enough, been destroyed as of no importance. Knowing the political activities of Messrs. Hoskin and Woodside, is it not a little suspicious that Mr. Sullivan took them into his confidence. Is Mr. Sullivan the sort of gentleman who acts for the public good? His information is looked on with suspicion by the police owing to "the source from which it comes." Who knew the political crooks in Seattle? Did John T. Scott or Mr. Macdonald? Who was able to place his hands on the right witnesses? Who was able to get affidavits without the slightest trouble, contradicting other affidavits? Who knew exactly when the men were coming, by what boat or train, and where they were lodged? Whose bar was open on Sundays before the inquiry took place? Who is supposed to stand in with the license commissioners? Why—who but our dear old friend and public-spirited citizen, John L. Sullivan, whose one object in life is to serve the public? Soft music heard in the distance—"Crossing the bar."

PLUGGERS NOT ARRESTED

There was all sorts of evidence given which the NEWS-ADVERTISER interprets one way for the benefit of its readers, and the SUN another. The former is naturally trying to do its best to show the Liberals are devils and the Conservatives angels, while the latter does the opposite. But it must be confessed that an examination of the evidence does seem to indicate that the Conservative party not only knew all about the plugging which was to take place, but connived at it, that is to say, they allowed it to take place in order to be able to prove it against the Liberals afterwards. Even if the Conservative party did not conspire to "put one over" the Liberals, as many people seem to think, they evidently did nothing to prevent the illegal voting by certain men brought in from Seattle. They complained to the police, but they did not get out warrants for the arrest of these men, and the police knowing through whom the complaint came, evidently placed no reliance on it, but thought it just a political dodge to affect the voting at the last moment. As a matter of fact, very few of the pluggers ever voted. Not only that, but the majority for Mr. Macdonald was so overwhelming that any such votes were absolutely useless. Also nearly every man outside politics with any knowledge of the situation, could sense the opposition to the Conservative party. Months before the election it was almost certain that any government candidate would be defeated in Vancouver. Therefore it would have been not only quite unnecessary, but also very stupid of the Liberals to try and make certain of defeating Mr. Tisdall by bringing in a few criminals from Seattle to plug against him.

UNRELIABLE EVIDENCE

The NEWS-ADVERTISER goes into hysterics over the attempts made by the SUN to turn the evidence against the Conservatives. The SUN, being the Liberal organ, may perhaps be allowed the same privilege as the NEWS-ADVERTISER, for the latter consistently has done all it can to distort the evidence. All the evidence so far produced seems to indicate that John Scott in some way was mixed up with the party from Seattle. As John Scott was paid by the Liberals, naturally the inference is that the Liberals were actually concerned in bringing in pluggers. Here are, however, two organizations, the city and the provincial, and it is to the latter that John Scott is responsible. Mr. M. A. Macdonald is president of the latter, and therefore presumably knew all about John Scott. Therefore it is easy to jump to the conclusion that Mr. Macdonald knew all about the plugging. But there is no evidence whatever to show that he did. On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence to show that the Conservative party knew all about the plugging through their friend, Mr. Sullivan. Mr. Macdonald had employed a detective to look out for plugging by the Conservatives. The government witnesses from Seattle were quite unreliable, as they were bound to be if they would hire themselves for such purposes. But they were all in hand and were all given complete immunity. Probably the whole lot would swear anything at any time provided payment was made for their perjury. Mr. Brewster secured certain affidavits from some of the Seattle gang which stated plainly that they had been offered money to come over and testify against the Liberals. Later on the extremely active friend of the Conservatives, Mr. Sullivan, stated that these men had said they were paid for the affidavits. Well —— who can rely on any evidence coming from such a quarter. Who paid all the expenses of these witnesses? Who paid for the pluggers? The Liberal party as a party cannot have done so, because they have not the funds. Did Mr. Sullivan, and is he likely to be out of pocket thereby?

AGAINST BOTH PARTIES

Judging by all the evidence given, it looks very much as if neither the official Liberal or Conservative parties had any part in the "plot." It seems as if John Scott may have known about it and took some part in it, but since he comes back to give evidence, and is also given immunity, there is nothing but inference on which to base a charge. The fact remains that he was only being paid $75 a month for his work, and that he might have easily tried to make a little more "on the side." Supposing that certain parties came to him with a proposition by which he could make a few hundred dollars, he might "take it up," even if it meant betraying the people for whom he was working. It is known that the Liberal party is badly off for funds. Every Liberal was absolutely confident of the result, so that it would have been very poor business to speculate in pluggers who cost a deal of money, and would be certain to give it away. But if after the election, it could be proved that which ever candidate was successful, the party to which that candidate belonged knew that pluggers had come over for the election, that proof would be very useful to anybody endeavoring to obtain something from the government. If Mr. Tisdall had been returned it would have been very useful to be able to tell the story of the plugging to Mr. Brewster, unless the government "came through" with certain legislation favorable to certain interests. The whole "plot" might have been worked quite unofficially by the "plotters" themselves. It is worth noting that Mr. Macdonald suspected something, and the Conservatives knew something, so it is obvious that both parties were aware something was wrong somewhere. It is perfectly certain that Mr. Tisdall would have had nothing to do with plugging, but Mr. Tisdall no more than Mr. Macdonald, is responsible for some of the parasites which cling to political parties. Seemingly the only person who could benefit by the "plot" is once more our old friend, John L., who might have been considering the political problem from behind the bar.

A BOOMERANG

In the condition to which politics have been reduced, it is unfortunate that the leaders only see the thing in front of their nose. If directly Mr. Bowser was informed of the incident he had taken Mr. Brewster into his confidence and dealt fairly with him, everything could have been cleared up very quickly. All Mr. Bowser had to do was to act as any straight thinking man would have acted. But instead, he at once jumped to the conclusion that he had been given a valuable club wherewith to chastise his enemies. He knows very well and the people of British Columbia also know quite well, that Mr. Brewster is absolutely honest. Therefore, if Mr. Bowser had said to Mr. Brewster that he had heard there had been some plugging during the Vancouver election, and that he would be glad to make some arrangement by which it could not be dragged into politics, Mr. Brewster would have at once helped in every way possible to elucidate the mystery. It would have been to the advantage of the Conservatives to have proved that despite his defeat, Mr. Bowser was a sportsman and a gentleman who recognized worth in a rival. It would have added very much to Mr. Bowser's popularity as a man, and made people think very differently of him. But Mr. Bowser is not that sort—he cannot see beyond the immediate advantage. He seizes on anything and everything which at the time seems likely to give him a political victory. Not being gifted with generosity or psychology, he could not conceive that the electorate would appreciate his attitude if he told Mr Brewster that all the information he had came from such disgraceful sources that he suspected a plot against both parties. The result is that the electorate has been absolutely disgusted, believes none of the evidence given, is sick of the way politics are played, and has a strong suspicion that the Conservatives have tried to "put one over" the Liberals.

LACK OF RESPECT

The report of the investigating committee is obviously a majority report hastily concocted, which made the case appear as badly as possible against the Liberals. But the electorate will not place any reliance on that report. Mr. Bowser's tirade against the Vancouver Liberal member, his obvious maliciousness, his determined attempt to prove that the various other investigations have disclosed nothing, whereas they have disclosed a great deal of political chicanery and patronage, will not wash the Conservatives clean. The electorate cannot be put off the trail of the Dominion Trust, of the money received by the NEWS-ADVERTISER from Mr. Matson out of the Songhees Reserve deal, of the Hamilton Read commission—by the reports of these committees. There may be nothing legally wrong—that is not the point. The wrong is moral and political morals are a question of character and principles.

It is merely stupid for Mr. Bowser to accuse Mr. Macdonald of acting for the wife of the contractor to the government on the parliament buildings, and insinuating that he therefore cannot complain of Mr. Bowser's connection with Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge. Mr. Bowser is attorney-general, Mr. Macdonald is a private member. That sort of thing only shows Mr Bowser has absolutely no sense of proportion, or for the matter of [illegible] humor. The "plugging conspiracy" [illegible] deal of valuable time, and its effect on the [illegible] electorate has been nil. If Mr. Macdonald [illegible] innocent victim of some of the old gang politicians who may still be trying to gain the upper hand in the Liberal party, he cannot blame those who refuse to be dictated to by a discredited and discreditable [illegible]

Most people thought it was dead and buried. If this thing [illegible] true it is surely dead, but its decomposition is attending with the usual unpleasantness. Nevertheless, Mr. Bowser [illegible] had a splendid opportunity since the by-elections to [illegible] that he was a real leader and not merely a politician [illegible] on retaining power. The times in which we live are not favorable to the tactics he has displayed. The old [illegible] these times have not changed—but there are none so blind as those who will not see. As Wordsworth says:

> With the progress of refinement this diction become more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintness, hieroglyphics and enigmas."

Plugging, the Bastard of Political Patronage

It is well to consider the general [illegible] real position of both parties, also [illegible] tablish some basis of right thinking so [illegible] when called upon to exercise its trust [illegible] presentatives who will be independent [illegible] to lend themselves to the outrageous [illegible] which at the present moment is [illegible] British Columbia ridiculous, not only in Canada [illegible] business circles of the Empire. It is no use [illegible] ters. Politics were the dominating influence in [illegible] legislative enactment of the past [illegible] ment was not concerned with business [illegible] cost of such legislation was of [illegible] bring temporary support to a party [illegible] had received a great shock at the hands [illegible] state of affairs is not only scandalous [illegible] business man can be certain at any time [illegible] to procure votes the present government [illegible] with his perfectly legitimate activities [illegible] ruin them. Investors who desire to establish [illegible] this province will hesitate before entrusting [illegible] to a government which shows such absolute [illegible] principles. Unless they are desirous of obtaining [illegible] particular concession they will keep their money [illegible] pockets until political conditions are altered.

THE "OLD GANG" STILL KICKING

This may seem an exaggeration. But a little reflection will convince anybody who is not blinded by political partisanship that the present system of political [illegible] sometimes known as the spoils system, [illegible] to construct a proper foundation on which to do business. The Liberal party in the province was [illegible] tem some years ago, and the Conservative party, as [illegible] by Mr. Bowser, is likely to be similarly damned. The people have by no means forgotten the activities of the Liberals in the old days. There are still many of the old time professional Liberal politicians left who cling to the belief that if they can only win the election they will be able to restore to power the "old gang" under the dictatorship of a certain shrewd gentleman who has no interest whatever in politics except as they [illegible] personal profit. Today that gentleman is [illegible] ing both parties. He is determined to regain the very profitable position he once occupied. He is quite frank, quite honest about it. He subscribes to the party funds for a certain purpose. That purpose is [illegible] business through the agency of political patronage. He believes money can buy anything, and looks on his political investments solely as a business speculation. No one can blame him. His point of view is governed by his knowledge of the men with whom he had to deal. The "old gang" politician cannot lift his head above the slime of political corruption. He still believes that votes can be bought and sold like any other commodity. He knows he [illegible] unprincipled himself, and judges the whole community by that standard. He is often a very religious [illegible] regularly to church and takes a leading part [illegible] reform movements. But directly he touches [illegible] politics his whole private morality goes by the board. He takes his stand on the principle that you have [illegible] such tools as come handy. Right is proved [illegible] by failure—a very simple recipe for [illegible] financial immorality.

THREATENED INTERESTS

There are certain interests, which for a long time have found it necessary to take part in politics. [illegible] these interests especially found themselves threatened by a change in political conditions. [illegible] were the liquor interests and the Pacific Great [illegible] Railway. The former were almost convinced, in [illegible] that the Liberals would support prohibition [illegible] under Mr. Brewster had already stated that the [illegible] submit prohibition to a referendum—in [illegible] were sure that a change of government, [illegible] would entail a change in the personnel [illegible] commissioners, which might be unfavorable to them. There is nothing wrong in having such an interest. Where legislation affecting all kinds of business [illegible] likely to be undertaken, those interested must follow [illegible] closely. The insurance men, for instance, had [illegible] interest in the Workmens Compensation Act. [illegible] and a very great wrong, in the conditions [illegible] business subservient to political considerations [illegible] either one party or the other. The appointment [illegible] under the patronage system of two of the license commissioners, gives the government a control over the liquor business. That system accounts entirely [illegible] the activities of J. L. Sullivan in the plugging conspiracy. He was acting for the Conservatives, his expenses, [illegible] admitted, were paid by the Conservatives. Political patronage in the liquor business places that business under certain restrictions which can be enforced very strictly on those who do not support the government, and which can be winked at when broken—as, for example, keeping the bar open on Sundays—by any favored publican. Do not therefore blame the publican or the interests who find it to their interests to "stand in" with the party in power. Blame rather the political system which panders to any interest which it thinks can deliver a vote.

MORALS IN POLITICS

Now it is plain to anyone who considers the situation from an unbiased point of view that the liquor interests did consider Mr. Tisdall a better man for them than Mr. Macdonald. They knew Mr. Bowser, had experience of him, had read his speeches before the election, in which he

emphasized the excellence of the present liquor laws, and they knew Mr. Tisdall would not actively oppose those laws and Mr. Bowser. But they did not know Mr. Macdonald. It is quite uncertain how many pluggers voted for Mr. Macdonald, or how many for Mr. Tisdall. The point is that the Conservative patronage committee, before the election, knew all about the pluggers from their friend, Mr. Sullivan. The liquor interests which take an interest in politics were closely enough in touch with the political situation to guess that Mr. Macdonald would win and, in consequence, they might, if they had so chosen, quite easily have br ight about the situation, hoping thereby to have somethin up their sleeve against both parties. The type of witnesses produced in support of the Conservative contention proves that they would have sworn to anything if they were paid to do so. If Mr. Tisdall had by any chance won, the evidence of the plugging could have been turned to appear as if the pluggers had voted for that gentleman. The number of votes plugged was quite insignificant, as far as the result was concerned, and, as has been said, it is not at all certain the votes were not split between the candidates. As for Scott, the clerk acting as a kind of assistant secretary to the provincial Liberal organization, at the magnificent sum of $75 a month, he could have been bought. To all this the cry that the liquor people are capable of anything, does not in the least apply. If some of their number did such a thing—as an organized body they certainly did no such thing—they were playing politics, and, let it be said here, that when it comes to playing politics, the prohibition organization is no better than any other organization. Mr. Jonathan Rogers is merely an amiable figurehead. Messrs. Hammond, Gibson and Dr. McGuire may be highly gifted moral reformers, but when it comes to finance or politics, their morals are no better than those of the men engaged in the liquor or any other trade.

WHENCE CAME THE CASH?

There is a lot of tommy rot talked about these things. There are plenty of men in the liquor trade who are every bit as moral as these political Chadbands who are using prohibition entirely as a means to an end. There are many very excellent men in the prohibition organization sincerely convinced that only by prohibition can the bars be abolished, and men made sober. But their honest convictions are pandered to by certain schemers and their support and influence gained solely for the sake of politics. The feasibility of certain liquor men getting together and "putting it over" both parties has been shown. But that the liquor men as a body connived at any such thing is absurd. The outstanding fact remains, however, that the official Liberal organizations, either provincial or city, could not have found the money for any such conspiracy. This point must be particularly emphasized. No one knows where the money came from, and Mr. Bowser himself, seeing that John Scott was warned he would be arrested if he came to give evidence before the committee, banged and barred the door on the one witness who could have given the very necessary information. On the other hand, Mr. Bowser, as attorney-general, gave complete immunity to the underworld of Seattle for its evidence. This is a very curious fact, and needs a great deal more explanation than Mr. Bowser seems inclined to give.

THE OTHER INTEREST AFFECTED

As such an explanation has not been given, it is perhaps interesting to seek it elsewhere. Let us then turn to the other interest which might be particularly affected by the return of the Liberals to power in this province—namely, the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Co., or any of the subsidiaries or parents of that organization. As far as politics in this province are concerned, it is practically certain that Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann have little interest in them. They are digesting their "investments." Their place is now filled by Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart. As has been stated several times, they are business gentlemen, and it is plain their position is very considerably affected by the political situation. They want to get on with their work, which is first of all to make money, secondly, to construct a railway, and thirdly, if necessary, to operate that railway if it is profitable to do so. They want no investigations of their accounts, they want no inquiries into their construction of the railway, their real estate holdings and so forth. Why should they? They are here to make the best they can out of the situation, and it would be extremely awkward if just because the people of British Columbia desired a change of government they found themselves subjected to all kinds of annoyance, simply and solely because they had made their original contract with a previous government. Just as anyone else acquainted with politics as they are played here, they might consider the situation carefully and come to the conclusion that they would have to subscribe heavily to the Liberal funds in order to preserve their independence in case the Liberals were returned. Their experience of politics is that if you want anything from a government, the only way to obtain what you want under favorable conditions is to contribute in one form or another to party funds. The safest way is to indirectly guarantee the payment of the election bills to whichever party wins.

MR. BOWSER MOST SATISFACTORY

Messrs Foley, Welch and Stewart, like the liquor interests, were perfectly satisfied with Mr. Bowser as premier. His law office was very convenient, and besides, had not his government $250,000 in negotiable securities belonging to them? What might not the Liberals do with those securities? Mr. Pat Welch, contractor, is a business man with—confidentially between Mr. Welch and ourselves—a "lead pipe cinch" on the Pacific Great Eastern Railway contract. He does not wish his business disturbed any more than Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart. But to contribute money directly to the Liberal organization funds might be very expensive, and moreover, it might not be acceptable coming from that source, as officially the Liberals had a fine field of fire provided by the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. Contractors to any government are always the point on which political batteries can be concentrated—again owing entirely to the spoils system. Therefore to contribute a large sum directly to either the city or provincial Liberal organization would be tactically poor business. But if Mr. Macdonald were to be elected, it was considered not only probable but certain that he would become attorney-general in the event of the Liberals winning. Therefore what would be more natural than to provide one of the many unknown friends of the company with a certain sum of money which could be spent on the campaign through Mr. Macdonalds' organization—which again appears to have been closely affiliated with Mr. Macdonald's law offices. Mr. Macdonald himself need not have known a thing about it, but he would inevitably have been tied tight by the fact that the money had been spent through his office or organization. The original contributors need not have known how the money was spent.

THE STANDARD OF POLITICAL MORALITY

The money for the plugging must have come from somewhere, and those who supplied it were working for their own interests, not for the interests of the Conservatives or Liberals. That the official Liberal organization did not know of the plugging is certain, but whether Mr. Macdonald knew of it or not is not certain. The great point in his favor is that it was sheer stupidity to risk involving himself in such a mess; that apparently he was obliged to pay some of his workers out of his own pocket; that he does not seem to have been overburdened with money, and that if he originally lent himself to the conspiracy, a few hundred dollars more or less would not have mattered to the conspirators, and he would never have been short of money to pay his workers. But aside from all question of Mr. Macdonald's responsibility, or the possibilities of the interests mentioned being involved—the plugging conspiracy is only a phase of the general political situation which has for so long troubled the province and which is entirely due to the low standard of political morality publicly raised by Mr. Bowser in excusing himself for his participation in the Dominion Trust scandal, and nailed to the mast of his governmental craft by his own actions ever since. Mr. Bowser excuses himself on the ground that every attorney-general in Canada is doing the same thing, just as if a judge would accept the excuse of a government contractor for padding his accounts on the ground that a government contractor in some other province had been convicted of doing the same thing.

IS THIS THE TRUE STORY?

Probably if Scott were to return he might tell the true history of the plugging conspiracy in this wise. There were about 100 names of voters on the list who had crossed over to the American side, and were dwelling in Seattle, Bellingham and other places along the Sound. Scott determined to try and locate these men, and was given some $400 which was raised from various sources for the very legitimate purpose of bringing these voters up on election day. But after the money was raised, Scott may have been unable to locate the men. It was then he either remembered, or was told that a certain Monty White—whom possibly he had known before—would be able to locate the men and see that they were here on election day. Now Monty White is apparently a professor of the electioneering game, and may have scented not only the $400 in Scott's hands but also a little work which might be well paid for by other parties. So possibly he approached his friend, John L. Sullivan, in Vancouver, with a scheme to make more than $400 out of the game. After all, it would not be necessary to prove that each man brought up here was a legitimate voter, as the list of the 100 in Scott's hands could be passed as correct. If Scott could be persuaded to leave everything to Monty White, that gentleman would see that the men were here. This would account accurately for the evidence given at the investigation and also for the manner in which Mr. Macdonald was tricked like everyone else.

PLAYING BOTH MAYS

But what hapepned after is not so clear. Did Monty White, scenting money on both sides, approach his friend, Sullivan, as has been said. Did Sullivan go to his friends on the Conservative patronage committee? He certainly appears to have done so. Here was a great opportunity. Monty White could be recompensed for bringing up the men, and they could be traced and all the evidence necessary to convict the Liberals of plugging gathered as it was given. It was proved at the investigation that the Conservatives knew all about the plugging, and that members of the patronage committee such as ex-Alderman Hoskin went down to see that the pluggers arrived. The police could not act, as they evidently suspected a political trap, saying as much when they stated they took no notice of any information coming from the Sullivan source. Was Monty White expected by Scott to bring up legitimate voters, and expected by Sullivan and his friends to bring up pluggers? The pluggers themselves were told they were going to vote for the "wet" candidate as an additional inducement to the fee of $10 for which they were supposed to work. Whether Scott would tell such a story or not is the purest surmise, but that story fits in with all the evidence, and what is more, accounts for the willingness of the Liberals to bring back Scott and the reason why the premier refused to withdraw the warrant for Scott's arrest. The premier did not know anything about the source of the money which paid for the pluggers, but, on the evidence given by Mr. Welch and others, he was told about the pluggers. In what form was the story told him? Was he told the truth, or was he, like everyone else, simply in the hands of a professional political expert like Monty White. That the Conservatives paid for the expenses of Mr. Sullivan is known. But how much went to Monty White?

DO NOT BLAME THE CONTRACTORS

The true story of the plugging conspiracy may never be known. Still it is plain that if by any chance this speculation as to its source were correct it would be most impolitic for Mr. Bowser to allow John Scott to give evidence. No one could possibly blame Messrs. Foley Welch and Stewart if they contributed to party funds and for making the best of a rotten situation. They have to deal with conditions as they find them. It is more than probable that if they had to deal with straightforward business men who would refuse contributions to their party funds, and who would not allow their private business interests to come prior to their duty to the public, they would far rather do business under such circumstances. They would know then that their contract would have to be carried out as made, that the political situation was not their concern, and that the profits would not have to be discounted by contributions to various parties who had political influence. The investigation into the parliament buildings contract at Victoria showed that patronage entered into all the sub-contracts. Whether such patronage cost the country one cent or not is not the point. It is just as dishonest as if it had cost the people thousands of dollars.

HONESTY OR DISHONESTY

The most extraordinary thing is that the premier believes that such dishonesty is quite honest if it gives him a party advantage. He is constantly calling attention to the failure of the two Liberal members at Victoria to discover any wrongdoing on the part of any member of his government. It is as though he expected the opposition to legally prove his government or its members guilty of embezzlement. "I gave them every facility," he cries, "to search our record for the last thirteen years and they have been unable to discover one thing against my government." He ignores everything which was brought out in those investigations, just because it was impossible to convict anyone. But the jury of public opinion remains, and that jury has not forgotten the moral aspect of the whole system of government for which Mr. Bowser, as premier, is responsible. It has not forgotten Mr. Price Ellison, nor Dr. Young, nor the Colony Farm at Essondale, nor the Vancouver Sewerage Board, nor the purchase of Indian Reserves, nor the Dominion Trust, nor the refusal to investigate the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. And not having forgotten, surely the public will demand at the next election from every single candidate a plain answer to a plain question. If every candidate pledged himself to demand a thorough examination of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, then whether the Liberals or Conservatives were returned to power, such an investigation would have to take place. That is only an example. Supposing at every meeting Mr. Bowser addressed, a question embodying that demand were asked of him, and he was not allowed to prevaricate or explain, but merely to give a straight answer, he would perhaps at last realize that the people are not fools all the time. They can be blinded by prosperity, lulled by soothing words, fed with promises, for a long time. But there comes a day when the people wake at last and determine that those who govern them shall at least be honest—for a time.

THE AUGEAN STABLES

It is no good saying hopelessly that the Liberals are just as bad as the Conservatives. That is to accept conditions instead of trying to alter them. An attempt is being made in these articles to alter the conditions. They do not pretend that it is possible to bring about the millenium and have every politician labor entirely for the good of the country without regard for his own interests. But surely one can see that the war gives a great opportunity of cleansing the Augean stables of political patronage and getting rid of our ward heelers, and other political parasites, whose sole idea of politics is patronage and personal profit. Moreover, it is certain that until Mr. Bowser is taught a lesson by the people of British Columbia he will not be the valuable public servant he might be, merely because he has been nurtured in a rotten school of politics and cannot escape from the results of that education. It is the pettiness, the meanness of the whole game which disgusts most people. The politicians believe that nothing has changed, that conditions are still as they were before the war, that people's minds are just as stagnant as before, and their eyesight just as dim. Many of us, in fact the majority, think differently. We believe that the people are awake and fully alive to the conditions which exist, but that they have been inarticulate. Public opinion is thoroughly aroused, whatever the politicians think. It finds expression most difficult, distrusts both political organizations, and is a little chaotic. It has not crystallized into a really definite policy because it has nobody to voice its feelings.

THE OPPORTUNITY

But the opportunity is there if only the Liberals can grasp it. If they can frankly come forward free from the political trammels of the past and pledge themselves to do away with political patronage and instal at Victoria a

government based on ordinary business principles, they need not worry themselves very much about policies. The present government has laid itself wide open to criticism of a very caustic kind by its legislation. It has added enormously to our debts, and has not provided us with any fresh sources of revenue. Some of the legislation is good if it is amended, and the amendments necessary are those which concern our financial situation. We have to take off our coats and work for our future, not sit in our chairs and borrow money [illegible] for us. What the people are [illegible] tinual political trickery—so well exhibited by Mr. Bowser's manipulation of the prohibition movement—which has no policy, but is purely opportunity. There are, of course, two sides to every question, btu there is only one side to the present political situation in British Columbia. Are we to deal honestly with business or are we to go on playing politics and allow ourselves to be treated like a lot of ignorant children by a shrewd and quite unscrupulous politician? It is absurd to distinguish the parties by the titles of Liberal and Conservative. All that is necessary is to distinguish between those who believe in patronage and those who do not. The premier undoubtedly believes in [illegible] system, what- [illegible] and the patronage system will collapse [illegible] the time being, mainly because during hard times expenditure is not on an extravagant scale.

The Financial Situation as Set Forth by the Budget

"THE only real objection to our railway and shipbuilding proposals, which are bound to be great factors of development," said the Hon. W. J. Bowser, premier and attorney-general of British Columbia, "is that we have to borrow money, when we are already in debt, and for the present, revenue does not square with expenditures."

The last half of that statement is quite true, the first half is quite untrue. The real objecion to the railway and shipbuilding proposals is that they are most unbusinesslike, as has already been set forth. The intention of this article is to show how much we are in debt and how much money has to be borrowed, not only for the shipbuilding and railway proposals, but to square our revenue with our expenditure. Such an intention, it may be admitted, is likely to pave the road for an extremely uninteresting article. That is the difficulty with all such questions. They must deal in figures and they are proverbially easy to manipulate in order to prove anything. Figures also—that is those figures which concern assets and liabilities—cannot be made interesting by exterior decoration. They have to be dressed plainly to be understood and all frills eliminated. It is not at all easy to analyse the provincial budget, because it is only natural that a finance minister in introducing his charge to the attention of the House, endeavors to hide its defects by dwelling on its best points. No mother could be more anxious regarding the impression made at her debut by her daughter than the minister of finance regarding the impression made by his budget. Mr. Lorne Campbell, who was responsible for the budget this session, was not responsible for the past of his charge. Truth to tell, he most probably would have gladly got rid of it. He confessed that he wished the people of Victoria had not been so discourteous to Mr. Flumerfelt, whose reputation in financial circles would have no doubt helped to dress the budget in its best. However, Mr. Lorne Campbell was most business like. He only mentioned what was complimentary in the past, rushed through the present with a sidelong glance at the extremely ungraceful figure his charge cut, and then launched forth on the bright future awaiting any one who cared to accept his assurances on their face value.

BELATED AS USUAL

There is nothing derogatory to Mr. Lorne Campbell in this. He is a business man and minister of mines. The future of mining in British Columbia is a matter of extreme importance to the whole community. His review of the great developments now going on at Anyox and Britannia, through the activities of the Granby Company, was extremely interesting. The only thing he forgot to mention was the effect on the revenue of the province, which might result from such development. His remarks [illegible] agriculture and timber were equally interesting, but unilluminating. Our "potential resources" have [illegible] a multitude of our actual delinquencies. A minister of any denomination is probably better employed in expatiating on the glorious future awaiting us if only we follow his advice than in continually reminding us of our horrible past. Moreover, Mr. Lorne Campbell's review of the past had to deal entirely with the budget of Mr. Price Ellison, the former minister of finance and agriculture, who interpreted his duties as the latter a little too literally. He evidently considered that ministering to his personal agricultural pursuits was part of his duty, just as the premier believes that ministering to his own law firm is part of the attorney general's duties. This, however, is only the humorous side of our general political morality. It is a pity that Mr. Lorne Campbell did not dwell a little longer on the humorous side of the budget he was presenting. As a business man he must have laughed a good deal at the spectacle of himself, as financial secretary and treasurer to the corporation of British Columbia, presenting to his shareholders a budget which was exactly a year old. His speech was made on Monday, March 27, 1916. The financial year closed on the following Friday, March 31, 1916. If he had postponed his speech for a fortnight, he would have had to present the budget of April 1, 1915, to March 31, 1916, which is exactly what most people conclude he did. Not at all—that would be most unwise. He presented the budget of April 1, 1914, to March 31, 1915, and the estimates of April 1, 1916, to March 31, 1917. To leave out of all consideration the budget of the year just past is one of the glorious idiosyncrasies in which British Columbia has indulged since 1909.

A POLITICAL TRICK

Those foolish people who always desire to know the reason of things must rest [illegible] with the knowledge that the Dominion budget, like the Imperial budget, ends its financial year on March [illegible]. But the Dominion and Imperial budgets are presented in April, whereas it has been the [illegible] British Columbia ever since Mr. Tatlow resigned to present the budget in March. The excuse [illegible] that the legislature is not sitting in April [illegible] busy the members of [illegible] necessary it is to [illegible] early in the year. But this [illegible] through April and May, it [illegible] by the ordinary [illegible] 1915-1916, not 1914-1915. There was every opportunity, but the legislature evidently does not consist of ordinary citizens. It is composed of extraordinary people, who apparently lend themselves to this bit of political trickery without a murmur. It is not [illegible] a budget which is a year old, is it? [illegible] that by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council the government advanced during 1916 to 1917 $[illegible] over and above the $2,[illegible] allowed for under the [illegible] bill. This advance could not be discussed by the House until the session of 1918, when the budget from April 1, 1916, to March 31, 1917, could be presented. That sort of thing is called good politics, not dishonesty. If it be granted that for convenience it is better to end the financial year so that it coincides with the conclusion of the Dominion financial year, is there any reason whatsoever why the legislature should meet in February or March, when it would be much pleasanter for the members to spend the spring in such a nice place as Victoria? If Mr. Lorne Campbell did not laugh at himself as a business

man being obliged as a politician to lend himself to this sort of thing, he must have lost his sense of humor.

THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET

Having thus introduced the budget with a few explanatory remarks, which were not made by Mr. Lorne Campbell, we will now pass on to the actual figures given by him. It is impossible to make up a proper balance sheet and present it to the reader, owing to the little idiosyncrasy mentioned, but by comparing the figures he gave for 1914-1915 with those for 1913-1914, as set forth in the public accounts, there appear some matters of slight interest. For instance, Mr Campbell showed a saving of $2,181,776 over the estimates for 1914-1915 in ten out of thirteen services. The three services he did not mention, presumably because there was no saving, are the Public Debt, the Administration of Justice (salaries) and Legislation. The estimated expenditure was $[illegible] the actual expenditure, $11,[illegible], a saving on the estimates of $1,800,000. The estimated revenue was $[illegible], the actual revenue was $7,[illegible], a loss on the estimates of $2,200,000. The actual expenditure was $4,[illegible] more than the actual revenue, but there was a saving on the estimated expenditure of $1,800,000. Yet the total saving on the estimated expenditure in ten out of the thirteen services was $3,181,776. As that sum was saved on the estimated expenditure, the actual expenditure should be $10,518,224. But it was $11,[illegible]. Therefore there must have been expended on the three services Mr. Lorne Campbell did not mention the sum of $1,[illegible]. As the salaries for the Administration of Justice and the expenditure on Legislation could not have amounted to very much more than in 1913-1914, the Public Debt in 1914-1915 must have absorbed most of that $1,381,77[illegible]. No doubt this little matter will be quite plain when the Public Accounts for 1914-1915 are issued, but it is obvious that Mr Brewster's plaintive plea that no time is given to the members to examine the budget is based on excellent grounds. For it would have been found that the Public Debt in the budget of 1913-1914 was $[illegible], it was probably increased by over $[illegible]. To bear this out it is worth noting here that the Public Debt service for 1916-1917 is estimated at $1,422,[illegible].

THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Mr. Lorne Campbell here showed his Lordship by emphasizing the savings effected on the expenditure on going to the trouble of detailing the services of Public Works under three different heads [illegible], and the services in which there had been an increase over the estimates. Those who are always anxious to criticize the service over which the attorney-general rules need not expect to find this date [illegible] $[illegible] on the Administration of Justice (salaries) [illegible] because, as has been said, there is not very much leeway in these services. There was a saving of $[illegible] on the Administration of Justice other than salaries, and although this service cost no less than $747,112.40 in 1913-1914, and $451,205.60 in 1912-1913, where [illegible] in 1911-1912 [illegible] $[illegible]808.06, and in 1910-1911, $223,339.36, the [illegible] Mr. Bowser as attorney-general [illegible] electorate for the expense. The strike at Nanaimo probably caused the leap from $451,205.60 in 1912-1913 to $747,112.40 in 1913-1914, but only the general sittings of the attorney-general can account for the previous increase in his department. It took place at a time when everything was jumping, and as he has evolved [illegible] the government, like everyone else, was [illegible] to be a little extravagant at that time. [illegible] plain from the saving of $5[illegible] in his [illegible] 1914-1915 he was commencing to see at the [illegible] crash. It may be hoped that the [illegible] in the services will show a saving [illegible] in the Administration of Justice (other than [illegible]) vice during that period. It would be [illegible] the $223,339.36 of 1910-1911 [illegible] by what has been said by certain moralists [illegible] moral conditions during the last [illegible] justification for nervousness on this score.

THE PUBLIC DEBT

Heigh-ho, but it's a sad business trying to make both ends meet! Mr. Lorne Campbell did not state what the deficit on 1915-1916 was, because that year had three days more to run, and of course he could not tell, or presumably even estimate it, until the returns were all in. But the deficit on 1914-1915 was, he said $4,100,000. The deficit—being the "kindly-call-at-your-earliest-convenience-and adjust-your-balance"—in the financial year ending 1914, being $5,283,653.74, while for the same period in 1913 it was $2,902,100.94, and also in 1912—even in 1912—$443,315.53, or, in four years, the small sum of $12,729,076.21. That means "Call-without-delay-and-see-the-manager." Oh, Hel——p. That is the S.O.S. signal in banking circles. Not knowing, as has already been remarked, how much more indebtedness was incurred in 1915-1916, but seeing that Mr. Lorne Campbell estimates our deficit in 1916-1917 at $4,043,085, we may presume it was around $4,-000,000. At least as if by the 31st of March, 1917, we should have acquired the nice little additional debt of $21,372,[illegible] and some odd cents—oh, well, we can leave out the odd cents, since the government appears to set us such a good example. For behold the beautiful argument now advanced to comfort those atrocious pessimists who criticize legislation which entails further expenditure. "We grant you the deficits of the last two or three years, but go back to 1911 when the Conservatives took office. The deficit was a deficit of $1,348,551.00. In 1904 there was a deficit of $221,533.41. From then until 1911 there were surpluses amounting to no less than $10,927,346.96. In fact you will find that for the financial years 1903 to 1915 the net revenue was $86,638,761.84, while the net expenditure was $80,013,576.40. Thus really on March 31, 1915, we really only had a deficit on the total budgets of $3,374,814.56." Hooray—Hooray—Hoo-bloomin'-blightey-ray.

THE REAL DEFICIT

[illegible] this argument for it is absolutely [illegible] 1911 inclusive, the government piled up a surplus year by year until it amounted to $10,927,-346.96 on March 31, 1911. After that something went wrong. The [illegible] expenditure entailed tremendous expenditure, and we will admit the government was extravagant. But still after writing off the deficits of 1903 and 1904, which amounted to $1,57[illegible]5.31 on March 31, 1911, the government had a surplus of $9,354,261.65. Its revenue had exceeded its expenditure by that sum, so it had a perfect right to be extravagant. This sum had [illegible] whatever [illegible] with no Dominion guarantees—it was the [illegible] surplus. In the next four years there was a [illegible] so that as Mr. Bowser points out, the real deficit [illegible] only be $3,374,814.56, on March 31, 1915. Yet the government borrowed $10,000,000 in 1914, [illegible] Borrowing an[illegible] that [illegible] from land sales had not been collected, there being some $15,000,000 [illegible] for the $10,-000,000. The first $[illegible], in fact, was borrowed on the security of these collections. But whatever was owing on [illegible] 1911 the government had a [illegible] in 1914, when its deficit could [illegible] $[illegible]76.21, did it borrow $10,000,000, which [illegible] on the total showing a surplus of $[illegible]. In the revenue for 1913-1914 there is interest amounting to $91,[illegible]57.47. This at 3 per cent. indicates that there was just over $3,040,000 on deposit in the banks.

BANK DEPOSITS

[illegible] because the Public [illegible] what sum the government has on [illegible] the end of the financial year. The [illegible] from the interest according to [illegible] Granting that there was a deposit of $3[illegible] to [illegible] of the government at the end of 1914 this [illegible] the $72[illegible]5.44 referred to, as remaining over [illegible] years. It may be remembered that Sir [illegible] that there was $[illegible] the bank's. The proceeds of the loan for $[illegible] less the sum of $3,374,814.56 which [illegible] the [illegible] 1903 to 1915 gives a sum of $6,625,185.44. If for the year 1915-1916 there was a deficit of $4,[illegible] as suggested, there would still be over $2,500,000 in the bank's on deposit at 3 per cent. But the estimates for 1916-1917 show a deficit of $4,043,085, and the government

provides for a loan of $4,000,000, so that the deficit for 1915-1916 may be rather more than $4,000,000. Still at the end of 1917 by borrowing this $4,000,000 now the government should have about $2,000,000 on deposit in the bank at 3 per cent. It will have borrowed altogether $14,000,000, and on this will pay on an average about 5 per cent. The interest then will be a liability of $7,000 a year, and the deposit at the bank if it amounts on an average during the period to $3,000,000 at 3 per cent., will give a credit of $90,000. The revenue therefore will have to provide for $600,000 interest on loans for current purposes.

A PLEASANT OUTLOOK

Mr. Lorne Campbell stated that fixed charges amounted to $8,300,000. These must include all interest on previous loans which are part of the public debt, and other expenditures which it would be impossible to cut down. Over and above these fixed charges, he only provides $3,000,000 for ordinary expenditure, and presumably the new interest charges on the $6,000,000 and $4,000,000 loans. It is obvious that we are faced with a very pleasant little interlude of interest on the guaranteed railway bonds already issued. According to Mr. Campbell, the total amount of guaranteed bonds "earned"—that is presumably issued for work done on the C. N. R. and P. G. E., is about $57,000,000 out of a total guaranteed of $80,322,072. Allowing an average of 5¼ per cent. on these bonds, the interest charges in any one year might total about $2,500,000. Then we have authorized a $2,000,000 loan on ships to be built. If we can borrow this at around 5 per cent.—and don't allow the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to authorize any more—we must set aside $100,000 a year for that, as well as over $50,000 a year for interest on the $1,000,000 for the Agricultural Credits Bill. The Workmen's Compensation Act is an unlimited liability that may cost quite a large sum, and if to this is added compensation for prohibition—the additional burden the revenue will have to face is very, very large. Guaranteed bonds for shipbuilding yards would add very considerably to our risks.

A SUMMARY OF INTEREST

To summarize these little matters:—

A.—Interest on loans of $10,000,000 and $4,000,000, for current account, less interest on deposits in banks	$ 600,000
B.—Interest on Agricultural Credit Bill, $1,000,000, at say 5 per cent	50,000
C.—Interest on Shipbuilding Bill, $2,000,000 at say 5 per cent	100,000
D.—Interest on $6,000,000 cash advance to P. G. E., at say 5 per cent	300,000
Total interest on above, unless Lieutenant-Governor in Council authorizes further adavances on items B. and C., as he has a perfect right to do	$1,050,000

The Public Debt for the fiscal year 1913-1914 was almost exactly $530,000. For 1916-1917 Mr. Lorne Campbell estimates it at $1,422,254, which indicates that the above summary may not be very far out, without taking into account the possibility of paying further sums on the railway guaranteed bonds, or the other items mentioned. The government has securities deposited, pursuant to the Insurance Act and other acts of incorporation, amounting to $1,101,474—at least this was the amount at the end of the financial year March 31, 1914. Presumably it cannot touch such securities, but it is worth noting that nowhere among these securities is there any mention of the $250,000 deposited by Messrs. Foley Welch & Stewart under the Pacific Great Eastern charter.

THE PROBLEM OF FINANCE

In any case there is over $1,000,000 in interest on legislation passed at this last session which must be added to the interest on the Public Debt. In other words, at least $23,000,000 was added to that debt. If we have to pay the interest on the railway bonds—and the Dominion government has already warned us that it expects us to share half of the payment of $4,000,000 interest on C. N. R. bonds—we shall have to find somewhere near an extra $2,500,000, or, in all, no less than $3,500,000 for interest alone on bonds we have guaranteed and loans we have raised. It is no good being pessimistic and looking at the worst side of things. We will have to pay interest on some and perhaps we may escape interest on others. Mr. Lorne Campbell is evidently allowing for an increase in interest charges on the public debt of over $1,000,000, and this is probably the best which can be expected. The problem is how to find the money to look after our commitments. Considerably the largest item in our revenue at the end of the financial year 1913-1914 was Timber Royalties and Licenses which brought us in $2,144,179.06. In his speech, Mr Campbell forgot all about the revenue, that is he did not give the house any figures to show how it had fallen off. He said it was $7,800,000, whereas the year before it had been $10,308,381.10. For 1916 to 1917 he estimated the revenue at only $5,944,015, which shows a drop of practically $2,000,000 between 1913 and 1917. It can only be supposed that the revenue for 1916 was somewhere about $6,000,000, if anything rather less. The government for the last few years has always depended on deferred payments from land sales making up the drop in revenue. These payments, deferred and otherwise, for the financial year ending March 31, 1914, totalled $1,172,953, and were rather less than the revenue derived from the Chinese restriction act. Nevertheless, they came third on the list as a means of revenue, but cannot be depended on now.

PERNICIOUS LEGISLATION

Mr. Lorne Campbell stated that the Dominion government second mortgage loan of $45,000,000 relieved British Columbia of its liability on the C. N. R. Pacific bonds in order that the Dominion government may make its security effective. But the Dominion government has evidently other ideas. We must reckon on paying the piper for our railway construction. The only right method is to take every contingency into account and allow accordingly. It is plain any government is faced with a serious proposition and that from one source or other the revenue must be increased. There should be opportunity for this in the mining developments. Yet nothing should be done to discourage capital, or productive development. That is why the Workmen's Compensation Act, the unbusinesslike shipbuilding bill, the continual search for money with which to purchase the vote of the electorate through popular rather than business like methods, are so dangerous to the country. Taxation should be increased, but it would take a very strong government to increase taxation under present circumstances, as it would deem such a move would be most unpopular. The question of prohibition, just as the question of the Workmen's Compensation Act, is not only a question of a good or bad act, but also one of finance. Can we afford to establish these expensive luxuries at such times as these? Do they increase our revenue or do they increase our liabilities or expenditure?

WANTED—INITIATIVE

The government has shown itself most reckless in its "business" legislation. It has shown itself most unbusiness like in its budget, which is purely political. It has been drawn up to give as good an aspect as possible to a bad state of affairs. But because the affairs are bad there is no need to be pessimistic. All that is required is a careful analysis of the situation, a business like and frank report to the people, and a bold attack on the whole rotten political system which is very largely accountable for the present situation. If the present government is returned to power whoever becomes minister of finance will have a great opportunity to show what can be done to pull our public accounts out of the political slime which chokes all initiative and really honest administration.

Political Peregrinations

THE people of British Columbia are watching the peregrinations of the various political leaders with a good deal of quiet amusement. The premier, accompanied by two of his ministers and Mr. Hold-Back Thomson of Victoria, first toured the northern part of the province, and, according to his own account, received considerable encouragement therefrom. His point of view is that the constituencies through which he passed will all return a solid Conservative phalanx to the next parliament. He says that the discontent aroused by hard times has passed away and that the Hon. W. J. Bowser & Co. is once more doing good business in the old way. The premier is convinced that the electorate is disgusted with the tactics of the Liberal opposition. He lays much emphasis on the fact that investigations failed to discover anything in the shape of "graft" in connection with the administration of past years. He is apparently gratified that not a member of the Conservative government has been put behind the bars of the penitentiary, and evidently considers that moral issues can be evaded if only the letter of the law is observed. He continually reiterates in all his speeches and interviews that the Liberals "discovered nothing." That shows his obtuseness and his complete lack of consideration for public opinion. Judging by his own words, he fully expected the Liberals to prove that the Conservative government of which he is leader, had been guilty of embezzlement or fraud on a great scale. As they did not prove any such thing, he thinks he has gained a clean bill of health.

THE PREMIER'S LITTLE HAND

As a matter of fact, the Liberals have proved a very great deal in the course of their investigations. They have proved how patronage has been worked to the utmost limit; how contractors have had to "see" the local Conservative committees before getting or letting work, and how Messrs. Matson, Hamilton Read and Alexander all received great benefit from their connection with the government. There was no need to investigate the Dominion Trust scandal. That cannot be hidden even under the mire of plugging. Premier Bowser naturally relies on this mire as a means of enveloping the Liberal attack. It may be taken for granted that the premier has by no means lost sight of the plugging investigation as a political asset. It appeals to him and it is more than likely that at the last moment he will try and use it to swing public sentiment against the Liberals. If he can keep his fingers on John Scott and two or three days before election get him to make an affidavit stating where he obtained the funds for the plugging, which could be published in all the newspapers, it would be the sort of campaign material he would thoroughly relish. The Liberals cannot blame Mr. Bowser if he does this. John Scott would perhaps tell a fine story from the Conservative point of view, if he were paid to do so. The whole question is whether this story is worth a round sum of money to the Conservatives. If so, they better keep a close watch on Mr. John Scott and at the last moment get his story and make it as public as possible—if it happens to suit them. If it does not suit them but proves that Mr. Macdonald himself knew nothing of the plugging they better, through their friend, Mr. John Sullivan, watch Scott and prevent the Liberals using any story he may have to tell.

TAKE NO CHANCES

It is rather wearisome being obliged to m[illegible] on this matter almost continually, but, unfortunately, [illegible] the premier's trump card. He hopes to win the election on the plugging investigation. During his tour he [illegible] probably thoroughly realised that he is on the brink of disaster unless he can change public sentiment by some such tactics. As far as Vancouver is concerned, he still believes he can win his seat, and that public sentiment, which was so much against him at the bye-elections, has undergone a complete change. Another Conservative convention was held and Mr. Welch retired from the ticket in favor of Dr. McGuire. Vancouver will probably split the ticket as well as the Conservative party. Under present circumstances, it is nauseating but probably true, that the Conservatives will make all the capital they can out of the plugging allegedly done at the last election by the Liberals. They hope to make that mud stick somehow. It is undoubtedly a feather in Mr Macdonald's cap that Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper believes in him, and it is generally acknowledged that Mr. Macdonald himself seems to be prepared to face the music quite boldly. It is said that in the whole course of his political career, he has never spoken with such passion or eloquence as he has done since the scandal was investigated. He declares his conscience is clear and those who heard him believe him. As has been said in these columns before, if he knows of anything which can throw light on the situation, if he can give out a perfectly frank statement of his connection with John Scott, it will pay him to do so. He is dealing with an extremely unscrupulous and shrewd man, as his opponent, and does not want to take any chances.

WILL SWEAR BUT NOT BET

So much for Mr. Bowser's tour and its results. His island tour was hardly a success. It is said that at Duncans the people would not listen to him. In the north they listened to him, but their enthusiasm does not seem to have been overwhelming. On his tour of southern districts he met with a very varying reception. He will probably speak in Vancouver during the month and his faithful followers will no doubt endeavor to stimulate enthusiasm which, truth to tell, they do not feel. Their sentiment may be summed up by stating that they would be exceedingly glad if the premier would transfer his endeavors to Kamloops and not run in Vancouver. They endorsed his nomination with much enthusiasm and made eulogistic speeches regarding his services to the party. But he is a terrible handicap, and they know it. Every one of them would swear he will retain his seat, but not many of them would care to bet very heavily on their oath.

MR. BREWSTER'S FRANKNESS

Mr. Brewster, the Liberal leader, and his lieutenant, Mr. Macdonald, opened the Liberal campaign in Vancouver recently. It is difficult to judge public sentiment by such

meetings, but the theatre was packed to the doors and there was much enthusiasm. Their tour of the province should indicate to some extent how public opinion stands, and according to all reports they are meeting with a cordial reception, much more enthusiasm being shown at their meetings than at those held by the premier. It is a bold thing, and the right thing, for Mr. Brewster to take Mr. Macdonald with him. What Mr. Brewster says in effect is that he has investigated the whole of the plugging charges, and is completely satisfied that Mr. Macdonald had nothing to do with them personally. What he says to Mr. Macdonald is this: "You are the one on whom these charges have fallen. You tell me you are innocent and I believe you. If you are guilty you will ruin the party by campaigning with me. Come out like a man or resign. You've got to face the music." And Mr. Macdonald, knowing the issues at stake, comes out like a man.

THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S VETO

Now that is the situation as far as the two parties are concerned. Mr. Bowser has tried to make considerable political capital out of Mr. Ralph Smith's somewhat tactless statement in the public press that Mr. Brewster was entirely wrong in launching that writ against the premier. Probably Mr. Brewster would himself admit he had been a little hasty. He may not have followed the action to its logical conclusion. But on the other hand he was up against a very peculiar situation. Supposing he had been led to believe that the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Barnard, would veto the bill providing for six million dollars for the Pacific Great Eastern and $4,000,000 for the Provincial Government on the ground that it was two money bills and could not be passed as a loan bill for $10,000,000; nor without first appealing to the people. It will be remembered that Mr. Barnard is said to have refused to sign the prohibition bill without an amending clause providing for compensation and that the premier threatened to resign and state in the house that the lieutenant-governor refused to sign the bill because he had invested a large sum of money in the breweries. If any such thing happened here was a great opportunity for the lieutenant-governor. He could have turned to the premier and told him to go ahead and make that statement and he would veto the bill just the same and issue a frank statement to the press on the whole subject. The story, on the face of it, hardly looks like fact, because the lieutenant-governor is an infinitely more popular person than the premier. If he vetoed any bill, the people would consider they had a really independent lieutenant-governor at last. There is no harm at all in the lieutenant-governor being interested in a brewery. He bought the shares long before he was an official and all he had to do was to plainly state facts. It is, however, a clear proof that a local man should not be made lieutenant-governor.

MR. RALPH SMITH'S INDEPENDENCE

But aside from this, if Mr. Brewster, through a casual conversation or deliberately, had been led to expect that Mr. Barnard would veto the loan bill, he would naturally not have worried much about the question of investigation. He would have relied on the veto to bring the matter clearly before the public. But finding that the bill was passed, he took the only means which lay within his power of attempting to prevent Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart getting their hands on the people's money. If he could hold up legislation until it was properly settled whether the legislature was legally sitting after March 14, he would prevent the money bill going through and thus also prevent the government borrowing money for Foley, Welch and Stewart, without first making an investigation into the accounts. It is also perfectly true, as Mr. Brewster states, that under present circumstances, anyone who is affected by the legislation passed at the last session, can bring action against the government on the technical point of whether the legislature was sitting. To save such action would have been beneficial to the public. Mr. Brewster probably considered it his duty to make a test of the point, and took the only means which lay within his power to do so. If Mr. Bowser had at once admitted the matter to the courts—as an honest man would have done—the whole thing could have been settled very quickly. Mr. Ralph Smith did not agree with Mr. Brewster's action because it is apt to hold up all business and thus prejudice the people against the Liberals. Like a good Northumbrian, he said so. He is always frank and always independent. But that is the privilege of Liberalism, and it would be a thousand pities if Mr. Brewster showed the slightest resentment of Mr. Smith's action.

Business and the Political Situation

NOW at last the two political parties are going before the electors. These articles have attempted to set forth in a readable manner some of the difficulties besettting the politicians and the people of British Columbia. They have analysed some of the legislation brought down at the last session, and while they may be considered generally destructive in their criticism, it will at least be acknowledged that they have attempted to give an alternative which would be business-like, if not politically wiser, than the methods pursued by the so-called business government, which the premier, the Hon. W. J. Bowser, has attempted to establish at Victoria. In every case, the policies of the government have been criticised from the business, not from the partisan point of view. For it is on the business community that the burden of legislation must fall, and therefore it is to the business community that these articles have tried to appeal. The difficulty of that appeal is clear when it is realised that business seldom considers itself as anything but a somewhat indifferent spectator of the political show until its own individual interests are affected. It then attempts to assert itself as an individual and finds that political interests, while they may be dominated by the individual, are invariably co-operative. The great objective of the political interests is to keep in power. Therefore legislation is judged entirely by its possible effect on the voter. No politician is likely to destroy the source from which he draws all his strength. He will not bring in legislation which is likely to prove unpopular, however much it may be a necessity of good, honest government.

LACK OF ORGANISED OPPOSITION

Thus the business interests at once find themselves disorganised. The lumbermen's interests may not be the interests of the shipping men, the mining men want something which is of no interest to the farmers, the farmers are not interested in the fisheries. Government, however, is concerned with all these things and realises perfectly well that they will not unite on anything which does not affect their particular business. Thus the shipping men find the government bringing in a bill which vitally affects their interests, but they cannot influence the legislation, merely because the bill seems to those who do not understand shipping, to provide ships when there are none and so stimulate a new industry. They hold meetings and formulate their objections or suggest amendments. But the government snaps its fingers at the objections and ignores the suggestions because the bill has been drawn up with a certain object in view. That object is to get votes.

THE BOARD OF TRADE

It is exactly the same with the lumbermen. They are vitally affected by much of the legislation brought before the provincial government, but as long as their own interests are not touched they stand aside. Instead of cooperating with other business interests, they try and act individually. Now there must be some give and take in all these matters. There must be some definite line on which the business interests as a whole can join issue with the government and establish themselves as a force to which the politicians will listen. Many people seem to think the Board of Trade acts as a precipitate of the various business interests. They can meet under its auspices, discuss the situation and come to some decision. In truth, the Board of Trade does do something of the kind, but it fails to make its influence felt upon the public. Its opinions are usually divided and the public is inclined to consider the members divided by politics rather than business.

IS BUSINESS SELFISH?

Now this is really the crux of the situation. How far can the business men influence public opinion? They have an exceedingly difficult task to perform, because for many weary years business has been under a cloud of suspicion. It is perhaps natural that public opinion should be suspicious of business. Business has never shown itself very careful regarding public opinion. If it has seen something profitable, it has snatched at it without much regard for public right. Business is considered selfish, soulless, and hard. Labor looks on it with hostility, because it is presumably capitalistic. "Business has no sentiment" is a common saying. Well, all this may have been so in the past, but today business is beginning to see things from a very different angle. Business is beginning to recognise that it is infinitely more profitable in the long run to have the sentiment of the community behind it than to be considered selfish and totally regardless of everything but its own interests.

POLITICS AND BUSINESS

Of course this brings up the whole question of politics in business, which most real business men are only too anxious to avoid. But this last session of the legislature has seen so much legislation brought down which is most unbusinesslike, that it is impossible for the business community to remain entirely indifferent to the general trend of affairs. Probably it is not indifferent, but merely inarticulate. The business interests do not desire to pander to any individual interest. They have to walk very warily in discussing public matters, for the very good reason that the public is apt to suspect their good faith. These articles have tried to put before the public, not the Liberal nor the Conservative point of view in regard to legislation, but the plain matter of fact point of view without any regard for various interests. In the long run, it is that point of view which is really the business interest, because the advantage of the one is the advantage of all. It is to the general interest to increase business and to build up this country on a satisfactory basis. No one, least of all any business interest, desires to sit on what it has obtained in the past and hope to hatch a profitable future out of it.

THE SHOWCASE OF LEGISLATION

The situation should be quite clear to the voter and to the business men of the province. There must be a very heavy increase in Dominion taxation in order to meet our liabilities caused by the war. There must also be a heavy increase in provincial taxation in order to meet the enormous increase in liabilities as explained in a previous article. We cannot evade these two issues. There must also in all probability be an increase in civic taxation in order to meet the ordinary civic expenditure and the falling value of the assessment which must fall in accordance with values. It is no good shutting our eyes to such plain facts. Now this general increase in taxation is liable to make business hesitate before establishing itself here. The more we try to encourage business by borrowing money to establish industries here, the heavier our ultimate liability. What we have to do is to encourage business by giving it every facility possible. It is inexpensive to find out what we have to sell and where to sell it. It is inexpensive to organise our whole business on a thoroughly business like basis. But to base everything on the supposition that money can always be borrowed; to imagine that borrowing money is increasing our assets, is quite futile. The premier seems to imagine that the voter can be bought by a dazzling show case of legislation, all of which looks very pretty if only the voter allows the premier to borrow money enough to pay for it.

THE MAINSTAY OF OUR EXISTENCE

It is this sort of thing the business men of the community are "up against." Incidentally also, not only the business men but the whole community is "up against" the same thing. For business is, after all, not an isolated part of the social or economic structure, but the mainstay of our whole existence. To survive we must carry on business, to prosper we must increase business. The legislation which affects the shipping interests, affects every man, woman and child in the community either indirectly or directly. If the lumber mills are shut down, the retailer is affected and there is so much the less money circulating in the community. If the fishing is bad, the same thing happens. The danger is that if the Conservative party as at present constituted is returned to power with Mr. Bowser as premier, he will consider that the country has endorsed his administration and will proceed along the lines he knows best. He will think that the people approve of his connection with the Dominion Trust scandal, of his most profitable partnership in his law firm, of his methods and his legislation. If the Liberals are returned they, at any rate, will have to try and "make good." They will have to be extremely careful how they go to work and they will have to avoid the temptations which have brought so much criticism on the head of the premier.

Our Standard of Political Morality

"Are we going to attract Immigration and Investment by our energy in developing our heritage, or are we going to repel them by pursuing our present paths protected by the twin devils of politics and patronage?"

ON September 14, 1916, the electorate will be asked to select representatives for the local legislature at Victoria. It is certain that a per centage will vote for the Conservative candidates and a per centage for the Liberal candidates without the slightest regard for policies or personalities. But this per centage is comparatively small, say 20 per cent. Conservative and 20 per cent. Liberal, or 40 per cent. in all of the total vote cast. The 60 per cent. balance constitutes the unknown factor which will decide the election. It consists of Conservatives and Liberals, is of a somewhat independent tendency, seldom attends ward meetings or other political gatherings except at election time, is apt to be caught by a gust of sentiment or a gale of prejudice, but, generally speaking, is not political, but practical. It is to this portion of the electorate the politicians are really appealing. Under ordinary circumstances, the political organisations can gauge their support fairly well. The parties fight their battle on well-defined ground. One or perhaps two issues, are to the fore, and it is not the past but the future to which appeal is made. In the present case, however, the issue is more personal than political. The Conservatives say they stand on their record. The Liberals interpret this record rather differently to the Conservatives, and urge that the good belongs to them and the evil to Mr. Bowser and his supporters.

LAND LEGISLATION

It will be probably be admitted by those who have closely followed the legislation of the last two years that much of it has been based on the Liberal demands which have been urged in the Liberal press for a considerable period. Undoubtedly the persistent attacks on the land policy of the Conservatives—said policy consisting of a limpet-like adherence to pre-emptions—was the direct inspiration of the Agricultural Credits Bill of 1915 and the Returned Soldiers Bill of 1916. The latter was amended several times before being passed, and Mr. Bowser promised Sir Rider Haggard to amend it still further at the next session, presuming he has the opportunity to do so.

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES

The Shipping Bill was essentially a Conservative piece of legislation. The Liberals tried hard to get it amended but Mr. Bowser thrust it through the house, against all advice. It was purely a political measure, in that it would give the appearance of fictitious prosperity to a specific industry, and the figures would sound well on the platform. The result of that legislation and its cost will not be apparent for two years or more. The Workmen's Compensation Act was specially designed to catch the working man's vote. It is an unlimited liability on the people of the province, is unbusiness-like in its apportionment of contributions, gives a great deal of scope to political patronage, rejects expert advice on a most complicated subject, and wrecks a considerable investment and business interests in the province. Basically, it is a good bill, but it could have been drawn up so that there would be natural co-operation between the insurance companies and the government. There is no need, however, to repeat the criticisms already made of all the legislation passed at the last session. There are, of course, two points of view regarding most of it. It has several good features, and many bad ones, which might very well have been eliminated but for Mr. Bowser's desire to keep up appearances. But outside such legislation, the loan to the Pacific Great Eastern Railway should be sufficient to damn any government or party. It was the most flagrant misuse of power. Despite the fact that it was passed in order to attract the vote of the country through which the railway passes, it surely is plain to everyone that the government rushed it through and refused all investigation because it feared such investigation.

THE STRATHCONA PARK "INVESTMENT"

Strathcona Park is an excellent illustration of how grossly the administrative work of the government is mismanaged, and how incompetent Mr. Bowser himself is as attorney-general. In the last three or four years, the government has spent well over $300,000 in providing trails and roads, in surveying hotel sites, and generally improving Strathcona Park so as to make it one of the great tourist and holiday resorts of the province. The Park lies round Buttle Lake, and at the time the property was acquired, the government undertook to buy the timber limits affected. These timber limits have changed hands several times but the government never completed its part of the deal. Apparently at one time Alvo von Alvensleben had an interest in this timber, and possibly the government believed it could write off its liability on the timber and acquire title by making it a credit entry against some part of Alvensleben's liability to the government. Be that as it may, it was plain that the company which owned the timber would have full right under the act to charge the government $10 a tree for every tree cut down in the course of the improvements, and would also be able to prevent anyone using the Park as a camping ground, and thus making use of the very advantages the government advertised so widely in connection with the whole scheme.

NOT AN ASSET BUT A LIABILITY

This is now exactly what has happened. The owners of the timber having found last year that camps were dangerous on account of fires, refuse this year to allow campers within their timber limits, which stretch for 20 miles round Buttle Lake, and through which it is absolutely necessary to pass to such streams and mountain fastnesses as may exist behind the timber belt. The expenditure on the park has taken place almost entirely within this timber belt, so that the government has invested some $340,000 in something it does not own and to which the public cannot have access, at least for camping or park purposes, until the limits are either purchased by the government or logged. The owners, it is understood, have offered the timber to the government at $1.00 a thousand. As there are 400,000,000 feet of timber concerned, it means that the government will have to pay some $400,000 to enable the

public to enjoy the glories of Strathcona Park. Of the government can do no such thing, and presumably, therefore, all the expenditure on Strathcona Park has been thrown away. Now, surely Mr. Bowser as attorney-general, could have foreseen such an impasse. If it was not his business to see that the government had a clear title to the park, whose was it? If no money is to be spent on the upkeep of the park, will not the roads and trails all disappear in the usual tangle of undergrowth? Will not the work all have to be done over again when the title is cleared?

COLORLESS CANDIDATES

Perhaps this is not so much an illustration of incompetency as of a condition which has been emphasised time and again in these articles. That condition is the neglect of business by the attorney-general in order to buttress and bolster his political and personal power. It is against or for this power the electorate must decide at the coming elections. It will be admitted that there is really nothing to distinguish a Conservative from a Liberal in our provincial legislature. The terms really do not apply at all. They are merely a convenience. Also it must be admitted that, it is quite probable that, given similar conditions, the Liberal party, if it had been in power, would have erred in almost exactly the same manner as the Conservatives, as far as policies are concerned. That, however, is in the past and does not concern the electorate. What does concern the electorate is the future, and the men who are going to tackle our problems in that future. This is what the people have to decide, and their responsibility is by no means light. For it is difficult to choose between men, both of whom may be merely party politicians without any individualism, initiative or imagination. So many candidates are only the colorless imitation of the heads of their party. They are only megaphones mechanically grinding out records. They cannot originate. Their idea of politics is to get elected through the operation, manipulation and organisation of their party affiliations.

CHARACTER VERSUS PARTY

The party form of government is undoubtedly the best in a democracy. It has its weaknesses, but it is possible to correct a party by defeating it at the polls. Democratic government by a brilliant coterie of individuals, none of whom could find a basis of agreement, would be impossible. The business of a premier is to gather round him the best administrators of his party and keep them working together. They can come to him with their ideas, and those ideas can be discussed by the executive as a whole. The executive can give its supporters opportunity to discuss its policies. All this is commonplace, but nevertheless must be kept clearly in mind when choosing a candidate. The candidate is apt to promise a great deal. He is apt to dwell on his independence—but unless he has an independent mind, unless he can think things out to a logical conclusion, he is dwelling on something which does not exist. His abilities are mortgaged to his party, which can foreclose at any time. It is of immense importance at this coming election to select the best men, but, unfortunately, the best men, as a rule, seldom can give their time to politics, and if they do, they are seldom nominated by their conventions. Independence is not appreciated at a convention. There is, however, one test which can be applied to all candidates, and that is character. How do the candidates compare in character?

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CONSCIENCE

It is probable that the elections will turn entirely upon this question. As has been said, the Conservatives stand on their record. Very well. What records have their candidates in a place liwe Vancouver for instance? The premier we all know—he has been dealt with. But as men like Messrs. Leek, Duke and Dr. McGuire are nominated, how is the electorate to discriminate between their character and that of their opponents? Now it is at this precise point we arrive at the dividing line between the two parties. The Liberal candidates have no political past—with the exception, perhaps, of Mr. Ralph Smith. The party has a past which it can safely be claimed has been obliterated by the Conservative record. For this record Mr. Bowser is totally responsible. He has failed to move with the times. His political ideas are still governed by those prevailing when he first tried to enter Dominion politics. He believes that parties depend on patronage for power. The coming election is a fight against patronage. It is a fight against the pettiness of ward politics. It is a fight against men who are bound to a tradition which must not survive if we are to prosper. To them as to Mr. Bowser, politics justify measures which they probably would repudiate with scorn if connected with their private life. Their private conscience and their public conscience are two totally different things.

OUT OF HIS OWN MOUTH

Are we to go forward to our destiny with courage and confidence, or with this present load of uncertainty clinging like a millstone about our necks? The Conservative party is entirely in the hands of Mr. Bowser and his special clique. Messrs. Welsh, Duke, Leek and some others are typical of that clique as far as Vancouver is concerned. Mr. Tisdall and Dr. McGuire, while they may not exercise patronage, are merely echoes of the premier. Mr. Tisdall is perhaps the best choice, he and Mr. McGowan who has a certain independence which would be of greater value if Mr. Bowser were eliminated. But the Sewerage Board, the License Board, the School Board, all have the Bowserian henchmen. The taint is at the fountain head and it runs through the whole party. The Conservative party, as a party, may not be responsible for the Dominion Trust scandal—which hit British Columbia harder than the war—and which cannot be forgotten merely because two years have elapsed between it and the election. The Dominion Trust failure and Mr. Bowser's speech in his own defence thereon are together the most damning indictment of his standard of political morality ever uttered in a legislative chamber—and the most extraordinary feature of it all is that Mr. Bowser never has realised it and never can.

THE REAL ISSUE AT THE ELECTIONS

Do the people of British Columbia desire to have the Dominion Trust scandal perpetuated? Do they desire that their attorney-general, the head of the department of justice, should act for the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, Messrs. Foley, Welch and Stewart, the Pacific Great Eastern Development Co., or any one of the contractors or companies which have special favors to ask of the provincial government? Supposing the Pacific Great Eastern Railway were to go into liquidation? Do they desire Mr. Bowser to spring to its defence, as he has already sprung to the defence of his other clients? Apparently the Conservative party, or at least the executive organisations of that party, acquiesce and favor this state of affairs.

That is the issue upon which the people must pronounce. It is no use dragging plugging scandals across the trail. The premier gives the lead to his party. He holds it together, he whips it into line, if whipping be necessary. If he is dishonest, the party which follows him is also dishonest, unless it rids itself of the incubus. If the Liberals are returned at the election, presumably Mr. Brewster will be premier. The people know he is honest, and they believe he will demand honesty in all his executive.

THE PROFITABLE MONOPOLY OF GOVERNMENT

We want to establish a higher standard of political morality. British Columbia has tremendous opportunities ahead of it. But politics, political patronage, and a low standard of political morality—the standard which justifies political immorality for the party's good — will work against us all the time. We cannot co-operate towards a common end if political conditions are continually to handicap us. We want an honest, straightforward government which will deal with conditions not from the political, but the commercial point of view. We want a business government which can administer the various departments of government on a businesslike basis. We want an administration which has the pluck to be economical, which is not always seeking to borrow money, but endeavors to cut its coat according to its cloth. Really the matter is so simple. The politicians complicate it with their profession. They look on the business of government as a profitable monopoly specially granted them by the people. They exploit that monopoly to the utmost. Whenever it is threatened, they endeavor to discover some method of bringing disaster on those who threaten them. Most of their time is taken up, not with the business of government, but with the business of buttressing their position. They are eternally retrenching against the day of the elections.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

That is why it seems so necessary to emphasise the character of the candidates, Liberal and Conservative alike. It is true that this seems to give an opening to all the political blackmailers, stool pigeons and other parasites which cling round the skirts of a political organisation. "Find out something against his character" might be the order issued from either headquarters. But the personality of the man himself should surely stand out above the mire of political scandal. The people must judge—they are the arbiters. It should, however, be quite plain to them how much depends on these elections. The incoming government will not be able to plunge into a debauch of legislation. It has nothing to give away and its followers can expect nothing from it. A change of government therefore means an endeavor to create something, to construct a desirable foundation on which to build later. The people will have a chance of watching the construction of those foundations. It is a matter of close study and consultation with all those who are interested in our commercial expansion. We must organise, we must give every facility to business, and convince business that every development will be fostered as long as it proceeds on legitimate lines. There must be no more browbeating, no exercise of political pressure or personal influence. This or that business or individual must not be particularly favored just because they have financial relations with the head of the government. No one expects the millenium, but everyone expects a better conception of what responsibility means.

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

By such means, and only by such means, can we restore the confidence in our future, which has been so sadly shaken. Our immense resources must not be burdened with a heavy load of debt which will prevent them being developed. The new government should spend nearly all its time in seeing that every department knows exactly what those resources are. There is no scientific development of these resources. There is no chemical or metallurgical department to which the investor can refer. There is no one whose business it is to trace our imports to their destination, no one who has a knowledge of what we can export and the possible markets which might be exploited. In brief, while there has been all kinds of sumptuary legislation, there has been very little attempt to get down to real business. The essential feature of all Mr. Bowser's legislation is the centralization of power in the lieutenant-governor in council, and the scattering of largesse, in the shape of places of profit on various commissions, among such men as he believes will maintain him in power. What we want are men of vision, who look outward to the vast horizons of the world, and not inward to the narrow confines of petty political patronage. We have immense industrial resources, are in close proximity with limitless markets, have the cheapest forms of transportation and power under our hands. What are we doing with our heritage? Are we going to attract immigration and investment by our energy in developing that heritage, or are we going to repel it by pursuing our present paths protected by the twin devils of politics and patronage?

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